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July 2010

INEVITABLY, the Final leaves a lasting impression on our memories of a World Cup tournament. Hopefully, in years to come, we will be able to look back on the 2010 finals with greater affection than was felt in the immediate aftermath of a wretched Final between Spain and Holland.

In this issue, we review all 64 matches and assess the major trends and developments to emerge from South Africa. The early feeling was one of disappointment, though relief that, thanks to Andres Iniesta's 116th-minute winner for Spain, the better team won.

Spain's triumph – their first World Cup title and the first for a European side outside of their own continent – was a triumph for a team committed to deep football principles of passing and possession. Yet whether we see the Spanish model reproduced elsewhere remains to be seen. Spain succeeded because they had a pragmatic coach who adapted their play to fit the group of players at his disposal. There is surely a lesson here for England, France and Italy – and others – as they contemplate their failures in South Africa.

This was a World Cup where the superstars failed to live up to their billing, allowing young stars such as Thomas Muller to emerge and make their mark. But it was also a tournament where counter-attacking – as typified by Germany, Brazil and Ghana – thrived. The worry is that we will see even more caution in four years time in Brazil.

Africa's first World Cup did not suffer from the organisational problems that many had predicted. Unfortunately, the continent's teams did not reflect the mood of optimism with their performances on the pitch. Ultimately, the 2010 finals proved to be another European World Cup, albeit with a new name on the trophy.

Few people outside of Holland will begrudge Spain their victory.

GAVIN HAMILTON, Editor
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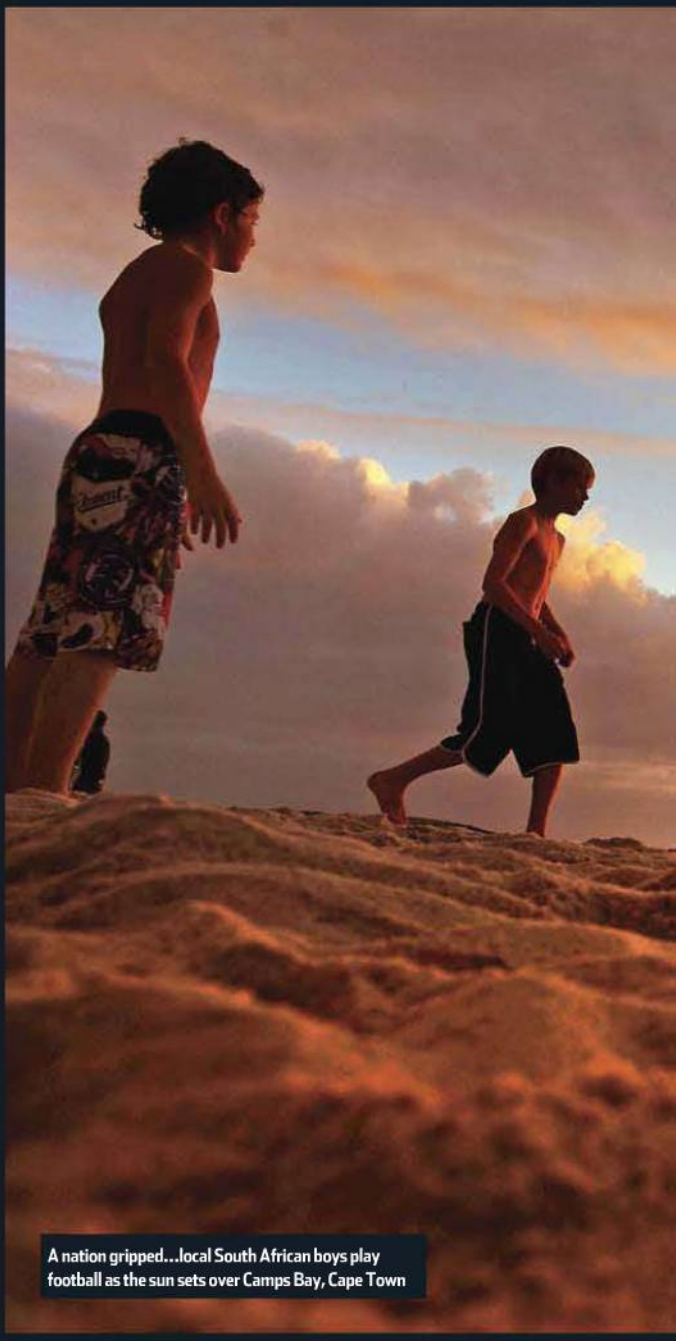

A nation gripped...local South African boys play football as the sun sets over Camps Bay, Cape Town

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TV star...Wesley Sneijder celebrates his winning goal against Brazil in the quarter-finals

Safety in numbers...New Zealand defenders close down Paraguay's Victor Caceres

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Brian Glanville

...on the mistake made over Capello and his campaign in South Africa...why Holland 2010 are no match for the 1974 version...and Spain's reluctance to utilise David Silva

WHAT CAN'T BE CURED must be endured. In this case, two more years of Fabio Capello. His pseudo respondent gesture, a determination to soldier on as the England manager despite the miseries of South Africa, has a horribly hollow ring.

Far better for him to fall nobly on his sword and depart, rather than exploit the fact that the FA, in their wisdom, failed to take advantage of the contractual clause which enabled them to get rid of him, or he to go, provided it were done within the two weeks following the World Cup.

As it was, the FA promised a two-week hiatus before they came up with a decision – then emitted it within five days.

By that time, of course, Capello had them over a barrel, since they had agreed to jettison that saving clause which meant were they to send him on his way it would be with the Italian pocketing a bagatelle of £12 million; the word being that they were afraid that, were they not to rescind the clause, he might leave and go to Internazionale.

Even before a ball was kicked – or, in England's case, miskicked – in the World Cup, should that have seemed such a disaster? Apart from that crushing Walcott-inspired success in Croatia, what had Capello's England team done of consequence over the past year and more? Prior to the World Cup they had looked modest against Egypt, mediocre against Mexico, and positively drab in Graz against Japan.

> "Capello had [the FA] over a barrel...they were afraid he might go to Inter"

Even when it came to the World Cup itself, Capello still, after all that time, failed to resolve the dualism of Frank Lampard and Steven Gerrard in central midfield, when the manifest solution was surely to put Gerrard in his recent Liverpool position, just behind the front striker, in the shape of Wayne Rooney; admittedly, a sadly diminished Wayne Rooney.

Expected to be England's best player, and even one of the best in the whole tournament, Rooney had a wretched time of it. Alex Ferguson's limp excuse was that the pressure was too much for him. What? After two previous European Championship finals and a couple of World Cups?

Ferguson may consciously or unconsciously have been masking a lingering doubt over whether he brought Rooney back too quickly from injury at Manchester United.

Capello could not be faulted for the persisting absence of any kind of playmaker in the wake of Glenn Hoddle and Paul Gascoigne, or for the injury to Rio Ferdinand which ruled him out. But why take so long to call up Spurs' Michael Dawson, who had an excellent season, was quick and did not suffer from eternal knee trouble like his Tottenham Hotspur co-defender Ledley King?

The choice of a manifestly far-from-match-fit Gareth Barry was another basic error. Nor did it make any sense to oblige James Milner to play against the USA when he was still recovering from illness. Capello could surely have expected greater professionalism and tactical awareness from John Terry and Matthew Upson in the match against Germany. And Robert Green in goal, it must be said, was always, on past form, going to be a risk.

Feeble and irrelevant is the insistence, among some of Capello's defenders in the media, that he won a clutch of titles in club football. What

Two more years...Capello will see out the remainder of his contract to coach England

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has that got to do with managing an international team in a foreign country – a task which was surely complicated by his halting attempt to learn the English language?

Will he now, heaven forbid, bring back David Beckham?

"Beckhamitis" was surely one of the salient errors of his stewardship. Time and again, he conferred on a player who could no longer run, let alone beat a man and get to the line, as a true winger should, meaningless England caps. The nadir was surely

Stunned...Miroslav Klose scores against England

reached when we were exuberantly told by the media that Beckham had now smashed Bobby Moore's total of 108 appearances – caps which were all won deservedly and squarely over 90-minute periods, with the honourable exception of the World Cup Final of 1966 when Moore played 120 minutes, including extra time.

For reasons obscure to me, Beckham was even a prominent figure in the England camp in South Africa – though for what earthly purpose, who could say?

OVERALL, it was not much of a World Cup but, by and large nowadays, most of them disappoint. I was not among those who expected a great deal from Dunga's Brazil who, even after a gift of a goal, still went down to Holland.

Even though he at last started scoring goals for Brazil again, once notoriously with the help of a hand, Luis Fabiano was no Ronaldo. Kaka, after a season at Real Madrid blemished by injury, wasn't the force he needed to be and the team fell away badly in the second half against Holland.

As for the Dutch, they had outstanding players in the shape of Arjen Robben, who even excelled himself by powerfully heading that goal against Uruguay, and the extravagantly gifted and versatile Wesley Sneijder.

The Dutch, as always, can also put it about when they want. Mark Van Bommel was widely thought to have been lucky not to be expelled by a tolerant Uzbek referee in the win against Uruguay. I still remember the shuddering foul committed in Buenos Aires during the 1978 World Cup by Arie Haan on Renato Zaccarelli of Italy, though, as I told an outraged Italy manager Enzo Bearzot at the time, Haan himself had been painfully fouled by the ruthless Romeo Benetti as he advanced up the touchline.

The Dutch team in South Africa wasn't in any way comparable to the dazzling "Total Football", Cruyff-inspired side which threw away that World Cup Final in Munich in 1974.

Overall, it was surely Germany who played the most attractive and inventive football, with three outstanding players in those gifted midfielders: Mesut Ozil, who justifiably ridiculed the pathetic complaint by England players that they were bored in camp; Thomas Muller, a true revelation who, alas, missed, suspended, the semi-final against Spain; and Bastian Schweinsteiger, who I've admired since he came on all too infrequently as a substitute during the European Championship finals of 2004.

Joachim Low has done an excellent job, even though never a major figure in club management.

LOW couldn't quite get Germany to the Final. I'd fancied Spain from the first, but how oddly ironic that, with all their attractive intricate, midfield football, with Andres Iniesta to the fore, their spectacular winning goal in the semi-final should be scored

Underused...David Silva

with a mighty leap and header by Carles Puyol, their centre-back.

It surprised me that so relatively little use had been made of David Silva, now bound for Manchester City and a very late sub against Germany.

Also surprising that David Villa should be pulled off the field to make room for a Fernando Torres who, fully fit, would have made such a difference throughout Spain's progress but was a somewhat bizarre choice as a late sub against Germany at Villa's expense. ●

GOALS
WE'D LIKE TO SEE AGAIN...

Rocket...Van Bronckhorst

1 Giovanni Van Bronckhorst, Holland v Uruguay
A thunderbolt into the top corner

2 Fabio Quagliarella, Italy v Slovakia
An exquisite chip

3 Shinji Okazaki, Japan v Denmark
This is all down to the assist from Keisuke Honda who nutmegs an opponent before rolling the ball into the path of Okazaki

4 Luis Suarez, Uruguay v South Korea
Some crafty footwork followed by a curling shot in off the far post

5 Carlos Tevez, Argentina v Mexico
A thunderous shot that gave the keeper no chance

6 Diego Forlan, Uruguay v Ghana
Swerving, dipping fee-kick from corner of the penalty area

AND ONE TO FORGET...

Embarrassment...Yakubu

Robert Green's *howler for* **England** *against the* **USA** *was eclipsed 10 days later by this miss of the tournament from* **Nigeria's Yakubu** *against* **South Korea**

To see clips of these goals, visit www.worldsoccer.com

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Champions of the world...Spain

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Justice for Spain

Iniesta's late goal steers Spain to the summit of the world game after a Final dominated by fouls and cards

JULY11

HOLLAND 0
SPAIN 1

JUSTICE left it very, very late but finally had the utterly deserved last word as Spain added the World Cup – remarkably, their first – to the European title. All those years, all that success at club level, yet only now world champions. This was a boast long overdue.

Not until four minutes from the end of extra time and the fearful threat of a penalty shoot-out did Andres Iniesta strike down a Holland team who, with their clumping, kicking and clogging did not deserve to be in the Final. But that speaks volumes about the overall quality of the football on view at the 2010 World Cup.

Dutch coach Bert Van Marwijk's team turned football tradition on its head as the inheritors of the tradition of free-flowing total football showed merely envious nastiness.

Holland might claim this a justified strategy since they fashioned the two clearest chances of normal time in the all-European 2010 showdown. They could have been painting Johannesburg orange through the night; instead, Arjen Robben was foiled on both occasions by Iker Casillas.

For those stops Spain's goalkeeper-captain deserves the world game's thanks in averting a totally wrong-headed outcome from concluding the most controversial staging of the World Cup since Argentina – for totally different reasons – in 1978.

South Africa, supported by FIFA president Sepp Blatter, had campaigned initially to win host rights in 2006 but was outmanoeuvred politically by Germany. FIFA, at Blatter's behest, then introduced a system of rotation which designated 2010 for Africa and made it inevitable that South Africa would win at the second attempt.

Nelson Mandela, against doctors' advice, made the journey to Zurich to lay his hands on the World Cup ahead of its journey in June and July 2010. He was back, having missed the opening game through family bereavement, to greet the Soccer City crowd during the closing ceremonials before kick-off.

Safe hands...Spain keeper Casillas thwarts another Holland attack

The show also featured Shakira projecting the official song which had thumped around South Africa for a month. However it will take far, far longer before any conclusion can safely be reached about the cultural, political and social benefits of the overall "tune".

At least the spectre of negativity proclaimed abroad about South Africa's hosting capacity had been exorcised and the three-million-plus ticket sales topped that of Germany in 2006, despite a slow initial local take-up. It was just a pity the two teams in the Final could not rise to the challenge in similar fashion.

The early exits of France, Italy and England had prompted premature obituaries for European football, but the twists and turns of fate turned up not only an eighth all-European Final but also the certainty of a new name on the World Cup itself.

However, Spain made desperately hard work of it.

Dutch football, through its coaches and players – Johan Cruyff most notably, in both roles – had played a singular role in the evolution of the Spanish game. Indeed, in a role reversal, Holland coach Van Marwijk had long proclaimed an admiration for Barcelona and a wish that his team could mimic them.

This was his – and their – moment of truth and they betrayed their own heritage.

Spain exerted all the early pressure, though coach Vicente Del Bosque may muse about whether he could have won in normal time if he had used twin strikers instead of retaining the starting line-up from the semi-final victory over Germany. That meant caution as a watchword, with David Villa as the lone striker, Fernando Torres held back on the subs' bench again and Pedro's pace being used to carry the battle to Holland in midfield.

Lowest-scoring winners

Given that Spain struggled to find goals – they were the lowest-scoring winners of all time, as well as the first to triumph after losing their first game – this was a decision which did the football element no favours.

Still, it did provide Spain with plenty of midfield possession. Total football as a concept having been developed by the Dutch before any of these players had been born, it was ironic to see them looking tactically static and being turned every which way by Spain's superior movement in midfield and down the flanks – in particular on the right, where Sergio Ramos galloped past Dirk Kuyt as if he was not there.

After only five minutes Ramos was fouled by Dutch skipper Gio Van Bronckhorst (in his last-ever game) and, when Xavi delivered the free-kick, he saw his header brilliantly parried by the diving Maarten Stekelenburg. Fortunately for Holland, no Spaniard was within rebound-touching distance.

Ramos broke past Kuyt again in the 10th minute and saw John Heitinga, in a panic, slice

Present...Nelson Mandela and his wife, Graca Machel

> "It's a great moment for me and for everyone Spanish. We are all very proud of this"
> *Cesc Fabregas*

JO'BURG (Soccer City)

HOLLAND 0
SPAIN 1 (Iniesta 116)
Aet. HT: 0-0. 90 mins: 0-0. Att: 84,490. Ref: Webb (Eng)

HOLLAND (4-2-3-1)
Stekelenburg - Van der Wiel, Heitinga, Mathijsen, Van Bronckhorst (Braafheid 105) - Van Bommel, De Jong (Van der Vaart 99) - Robben, Sneijder, Kuyt (Elia 70) - Van Persie.
Booked: Van Persie, Van Bommel, De Jong, Van Bronckhorst, Heitinga, Robben, Van Der Wiel, Mathijsen.
Sent off: Heitinga 109mins.

SPAIN (4-2-3-1)
Casillas - Sergio Ramos, Pique, Puyol, Capdevila - Busquets, Xabi Alonso (Fabregas 87) - Iniesta, Xavi, Pedro (Navas 60) - Villa (Torres 105).
Booked: Puyol, Sergio Ramos, Capdevila, Iniesta, Xavi.

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his cross over the Dutch bar. After the corner, Xabi Alonso slung over yet another dangerous centre and this time Villa, beyond the far post and unmarked, volleyed into the side netting.

Holland, with Van Marwijk irritated in the technical area, had to put some grit into the game to reclaim lost ground and time. That sparked 14 tetchy minutes which brought yellow cards for Robin Van Persie, Carles Puyol, Mark Van Bommel, Sergio Ramos and Nigel De Jong.

Dutch aggression did, at least, achieve its objective in breaking up the rhythm of Spain's initial flowing football. Wesley Sneijder was not booked but was lectured by referee Howard Webb after recklessly bundling into Sergio Busquets and Xabi Alonso thumped an over-optimistic free-kick wide.

In all the first half Casillas had three moments of concern. One was a long, low free-kick from Sneijder which he caught securely, the second a give-back lob from Gregory Van der Wiel after an injury incident which bounced off the tips of his fingers and just wide of goal, and then a Robben drive just on half-time which he tipped around a post.

To that extent, worryingly for Spain, Casillas had been forced into making more stops than his Dutch opposite number.

The second half started much the same way, with Spain trying to play football and Holland trying to kick it out of them. Both Van Bronckhorst and Heitinga were booked for sly fouls, though Joan Capdevila could have made it easier for Spain had he not missed from close range after Puyol headed on Xavi's corner.

Busy...referee Webb

Clearest chance

Robben then missed the clearest chance of the night when a defence-splitting pass from Sneijder caught Spain wide open. Robben raced into the box, deceived Casillas into diving the wrong way but saw his shot flick the keeper's outstretched boot and bounce wide.

Spain, relieved, returned to the attack but Villa was shooting wildly at half-chances, and even when substitute Jesus Navas turned Holland inside out the ex-Valencia man saw his effort deflected over the bar. Worse, Ramos planted a free header over the top from a left-wing corner.

Robben ran away clear yet again, shook off an attempt at a foul by Puyol only for Casillas to snatch the ball off his feet. Robben, ignoring the fact that Webb had given him the advantage, chased the referee in anger and joined the yellow card pack.

Extra time brought bad misses at both ends. Spain sub Cesc Fabregas went clear but hit the keeper, Andres Iniesta delayed a shot too long, then Navas had a low drive deflected wide. Inbetween, Holland's Joris Mathijsen wasted a gift of a header from a corner.

Spain brought on Torres for the misfiring Villa and Holland had Heitinga sent off for pulling back Iniesta – who took revenge by scoring the winner after an exchange between Torres and Fabregas. His vest revealed a tribute to Dani Jarque, the Espanyol captain who died last year during a pre-season tour.

Holland had eight players booked, compared with Spain's five. In the Premier League referee Webb would have produced at least one red card long before the 90 minutes were up, maybe even before half-time. If he had done so – particularly to De Jong for his lunge on Xabi Alonso – he might have done Spain, himself, the World Cup Final and football in general a favour.

His wish to keep everyone on the pitch was understandable, but that meant the total of 15 cards – 14 yellow and one red – was the highest since the 20-card second round clash in 2006 between Portugal and Holland.

It was the expulsion of Heitinga which thinned out the Holland defence and saved the 2010 World Cup from a penalty shoot-out.

To Spain the glory. At the very last justice was most definitely done.

Keir Radnedge

KEY MOMENTS

5MINS
Sergio Ramos' header from a corner is well saved by Holland goalkeeper Maarten Stekelenburg.

15MINS
First booking, for Robin Van Persie.

30MINS
Nigel De Jong is lucky to stay on the pitch after a high lunge on Xabi Alonso's chest.

83MINS
Robben is almost through but Carles Puyol stops him

100MINS
Cesc Fabregas is played in on goal by Iniesta, but Stekelenburg saves brilliantly with feet.

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WHAT THEY SAID...

VICENTE DEL BOSQUE, SPAIN COACH

"This is an unforgettable moment. We have to congratulate our rivals because they made it very difficult for us.

"The Final was all about attacking football and both sides tried to play the game the way it should be played. There's a great sense of happiness in the dressing room right now.

"It's hard to put it all into words and the way the players feel goes way beyond words. The satisfaction people feel goes way beyond sport and this is a reward that's richly deserved.

"I'd like to thank the Spain fans for all their support. They're enjoying this as much as the players."

ANDRES INIESTA, SPAIN MIDFIELDER

"It's hard to put into words how it feels to win a World Cup. To win it that way was amazing. It didn't come easy and I still can't believe it. I'm just happy I managed to do my bit and score such an important goal for the national side. It's a game to remember and to celebrate. All we want to do now is go home and enjoy it."

SERGIO BUSQUETS, SPAIN MIDFIELDER

"We've been waiting a whole life for this. All I can think about are my family and friends, the people who couldn't make it here. This is for them.

"We've got better as the tournament's gone on and though the first game didn't go our way we managed to turn it around after that. There were times today when we weren't ourselves but we managed to get the win in the end.

"I still can't believe it."

BERT VAN MARWIJK, HOLLAND COACH

"Obviously, we're devastated by the result. We were down to 10 men but almost made it to

penalties. You have to say the better team won, but losing the World Cup Final is hard to take.

"Spain created far more chances, but Arjen Robben twice came within inches of scoring for us. If he had, I think we'd have been world champions."

DIRK KUYT, HOLLAND FORWARD

"It's so frustrating, I'm totally gutted. We were so close to winning the World Cup, and we had chances too. But you've got to take your chances. That aside, Spain are a terrific team."

GIOVANNI VAN BRONCKHORST, HOLLAND CAPTAIN

"We've come so close, and that makes it even more disappointing. We had to take one of our chances, and you never know what might have happened after that. We gave them too much space in midfield at times, but I'm still proud of this team. Having said that, once you're in the Final, you want to win it."

NIGEL DE JONG, HOLLAND MIDFIELDER

"We're incredibly disappointed. We gave it our best shot, but it wasn't to be."

62MINS
Iker Casillas saves with his legs from Arjen Robben.

70MINS
David Villa's close-range shot deflected wide.

77MINS
Sergio Ramos heads over from a corner.

104MINS
Jesus Navas' shot goes wide.

109 MINS
John Heitinga is sent off for a second yellow card.

116MINS
Andres Iniesta scores the winner.

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Driving force...Villa

Hail the change

Spain, for so long the great underachievers, are now the overchievers of the international game, says Sid Low

SO accustomed to ask what went wrong, Spain – for so long the game's great underachievers, now its world and European champions – are now asking what went so right? And so too is everyone else.

The temptation might be to answer everything, but that just wouldn't be true. And not just because Spain lost their opening game. Until Spain beat Paraguay in the quarter-finals, there were countless questions and debates swirling around the *seleccion*.

It is as if it took Spain breaking that barrier and reaching a first-ever semi-final for critics to agree that, actually, they were rather good after all. Maybe just not quite good in quite the same way as everyone had expected. By the end of the tournament, as much was being said about the quality of Spain's defence as their attack, as much about solidity as fantasy.

Among the questions, the queries and the fears were the form of Fernando Torres, eventually dropped against Germany, and the role of the infamous doble pivote – most didn't see the need for two nominally deep-playing midfielders and called for one of Xabi Alonso or Sergio Busquets to be ditched. Some wanted Cesc Fabregas in the side, some David Silva. Some feared that Andres Iniesta was not fit enough.

Then there were those who were concerned about the relative lack of goals, David Villa rescuing Spain almost single-handedly – and becoming a huge national hero into the bargain, finally getting the unqualified recognition he had long deserved.

The path had been relatively clear – they avoided Brazil and Italy and Argentina – and though they had reached the Final, their progress had not always been as impressive as hoped.

They had been under terrible pressure against Chile – a game they needed to win to even get out the group – until Villa scored a wonderful long-range goal. Against Portugal, they struggled to find a way through, Villa eventually scoring from what looked very close to an offside position. Against Paraguay, Iker Casillas saved a penalty that might well have put them out, then made a stunning point-blank stop in the dying minutes that certainly would have put Paraguay back in it.

Wonderful chance

Even against Germany in the semi-finals, there was a wonderful chance for Toni Kroos and the Spain goal came from a powering header at a corner – not

The ultimate goal

Dutch football has learned to focus on the result, says Klaas-Jan Droppert

FORGET Total Football the way you used to know it. It still exists, but it has adapted to modern day needs.

Gone are the days when Holland played dazzling football, adored by the game's true romantics, only to discover that it leads to nothing but an early exit. Now results mean everything and winning ugly is no longer a national shame. Indeed, Holland are playing like the Germans have played for decades – and hoping to win as much silverware as *Die Mannschaft*.

Focus is the new magic word in the Holland camp. Focus on the next opponent, focus on your own performance, focus on the forthcoming game, focus on the ultimate goal of becoming world champions.

Since his appointment in 2008, Bert Van Marwijk told his disciples that they were on a mission. The ex-Borussia Dortmund and Feyenoord coach was clear what he wanted from his players. In return he gave the players his full confidence, even when they were out of form. Nine of the team who started the Final against Spain kicked off Van Marwijk's first game in charge.

For Van Marwijk the result is everything. Even the slightest hint of Holland's traditional squabbling was extinct. When he substituted Robin Van Persie against Slovakia a lip-reader "translated" that the Arsenal striker said "he [Van Marwijk] should have subbed Sneijder". Back in the hotel he immediately challenged Van Persie and nipped the difference of opinion in the bud. The focus turned to the next game.

The same goes for the "national discussion" on whether Van Marwijk should field Van Persie, Rafael Van der Vaart, Wesley Sneijder and Arjen Robben in order to play more attack-minded football. For Van Marwijk, this was never an option because it would have cost Dirk Kuyt his place.

"He is the first on my team sheet," said Van Marwijk, appreciating his enormous work rate.

Van Marwijk is a fan of Barcelona's way of play and would have preferred to let his team play their "normal" beautiful football. But with opponents not taking risks he adapted Holland to the international standard, putting safety first by using two defensive midfielders and gambling on the class of individuals such as Sneijder and Robben.

Although this team had Van Marwijk's signature, it contained elements of other great coaches. Sneijder, Robben and Mark Van Bommel excelled under Jose Mourinho and Louis Van Gaal last season, playing in the Champions League Final and collecting league prizes in Italy and Germany. They have brought a winning formula and confidence to the national team.

Mourinho has turned Sneijder into a true southern European midfield maestro and his five goals made him one of the outstanding players of the tournament.

Van Bommel, on the other hand, is extremely important in helping the team maintain its balance. With his positional play he won almost every battle and he was also a master provoker. The closest comparison is with Lothar Matthaus, the most hated German player ever in Holland, in his heyday.

Committing "useful" fouls, disturbing the rhythm of opponents and asking for yellow cards are all tricks of the Bayern Munich captain, who broke the focus of Brazil and Uruguay in the quarter-final and semi-final

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the most *tiki taka* of goals.

After the Germany game there was a very different reading, though. That was natural enough – the opponents were different and, in truth, the performance had been too. Control without flair appears so much more impressive against the side that had most wowed watchers than, say, Paraguay.

When they defeated Germany, any doubts were finally washed away with the sports daily *AS* declaring: "That must be how football is played in paradise."

For Spain, the way they reached the Final was significant – if not, obviously quite as significant as the fact they got there at all. After the Honduras and Chile games – oddly, the only ones in which they scored twice – some had accused them of selling out on their *tiki taka* style.

They were wrong. The opposite is true: if there is one thing that went right above all others it is Spain's commitment to a footballing style. It might not have been as dazzling as some hoped, but it was devastatingly effective. Possession of the ball was shown not only to be a means to scoring goals but, even more importantly, a means to preventing them too, a way of controlling the game.

And no one maintains possession like Spain, as Germany found out to their cost. Yes, Spain had had their nervy moments. Sure, they had not created the chances they expected, but there was an unquestioned mastery to their games – no other side in the World Cup produced as many passes or enjoyed greater possession, effectively neutering the opposition. *Tiki taka* can be a defensive tactic as much as an offensive one.

"When we did eventually get the ball back, we were exhausted from chasing it for so long," admitted Germany's Miroslav Klose. His words echoed those of countless opponents over the last two years – words of frustration and impotence. Spain's choice of path to the Final never wavered, even when they said it had. And in the end, it proved the right one to take. The Spanish have long considered their football the most aesthetic.

For the last two years it has proven the most effective too. ●

Master provoker...Van Bommel (left)

respectively. As the tournament progressed, most pundits accepted the wisdom of Van Marwijk's strategy. The exceptions were Johan Cruyff and Wim Van Hanegem, key figures in Holland's beautiful but ultimately unsuccessful team at the 1974 World Cup. They remained wedded to their old-fashioned views, hoping after every match that Holland would improve in the next match.

Now, even with Holland's World Cup Final defeat, they can see that the only thing that really matters is the ultimate prize. No matter how it was achieved. ●

THIRD-PLACE PLAY-OFF

URUGUAY 2-3 GERMANY

On target again...Muller opens the scoring

JULY 10

URUGUAY 2
GERMANY 3

THE match that nobody wanted to play ended up being an entertaining affair as Germany beat Uruguay in rainswept Port Elizabeth to claim third place.

Fittingly, it was midfielder Sami Khedira, one of the emerging stars of Germany's young side, who scored the winning goal, forcing home a corner in the 82nd minute.

Inevitably, both teams made changes to their defeated semi-final line-ups. Uruguay welcomed back captain Diego Lugano from injury, and Jorge Fucile and Luis Suarez returned after suspension.

Germany coach Joachim Low left Miroslav Klose on the bench, despite the striker needing one goal to overtake Ronaldo as the World Cup's leading scorer. Cacau took his place, with Thomas Muller back after his absence from the semi-final following two yellow cards earlier in the competition.

Once again the Jabulani ball played a part in a goal. Bastian Schweinsteiger's 19th-minute shot swerved as it approached Uruguay keeper Fernando Muslera, who could only parry the ball and Muller scored his fifth goal of the tournament.

Uruguay had equalised within 10 minutes. Suarez, the subject of persistent booing from the crowd for most of the match, broke from midfield and provided the assist for Edinson Cavani to score.

Diego Forlan gave a reminder of the talent that had driven Uruguay to the semi-final when his acrobatic 51st-minute volley flew into the wet turf and flew past Hans-Jorg Butt.

But the Uruguay lead lasted all of five minutes before Jerome Boateng found space on the right flank to send in a deep cross which was missed by Muslera but not by Marcell Jansen, who headed home.

After Khedira's goal eight minutes from time, Forlan almost added his sixth goal of the tournament but his injury-time free-kick crashed against the crossbar.

John Holmesdale

PORT ELIZABETH

URUGUAY 2 (Cavani 28, Forlan 51)
GERMANY 3 (Muller 19, Jansen 56, Khedira 82)
HT: 1-1. Att: 36,007. Ref: Archundia (Mex)

URUGUAY (4-4-2)
Muslera – Fucile, Lugano, Godin, Caceres – M Pereira, Arevalo, Perez (Gargano 77), Cavani (Abreu 88) – Suarez, Forlan.
Booked: Perez.

GERMANY (4-2-3-1)
Butt - Boateng, Mertesacker, Friedrich, Aogo – Schweinsteiger, Khedira – Muller, Ozil (Tasci 90), Jansen (Kroos 81) – Cacau (Kiessling 73).
Booked: Aogo, Friedrich, Cacau.

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Golden Ball winner...Uruguay's Forlan

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Stars of the show

Gavin Hamilton picks the outstanding performers of the 2010 World Cup

Goalkeeper

A problem position as no keeper really shone in the latter stages of the tournament. Early on, **Vincent Enyeama** (Nigeria) helped his team avoid embarrassment against Argentina, and **Eduardo** (Portugal) conceded just one goal in four games. **Fernando Muslera** (Uruguay) twice saved weak Ghana penalties in the quarter-final shoot-out, but – like **Maarten Van Stekelenberg** (Holland) – he was at fault for goals in the semi-final. **Manuel Neuer** (Germany) did a competent job but was rightly condemned for his gamesmanship in pretending England's "ghost" goal had not crossed the line.

Iker Casillas (Spain) may have been overlooked in the rush to praise Spain's outfield performances, but he made two crucial saves from Arjen Robben in the Final.

Full-backs

The position has almost become that of playmaker in the modern international game. With so many teams deploying lone strikers, the wide defenders who exploited the space in front of them, while also taking care of defensive duties, proved to be some of the most effective players in the tournament. **Fabio Coentrao** (Portugal) was an exciting presence on the left flank, while **Sergio Ramos** (Spain) performed a similar role on the right. Veteran **Giovanni Van Bronckhorst** (Holland) deserves recognition for his opening goal against Uruguay.

Maicon (Brazil) was outstanding at right-back. He was often his country's biggest attacking threat and his goal against North Korea defied the laws of natural physics.

Philipp Lahm (Germany) played on both the left and right, and was equally effective in both positions. He provided Germany with crucial leadership in the absence of Michael Ballack.

Centre-backs

Central defenders were the unsung heroes of the competition. **Simon Kjaer** (Denmark) was brilliant in two games before missing the Danes' last match. **Ricardo Carvalho** (Portugal) was a major factor in his team keeping a clean sheet in their group matches. **Per Mertesacker** (Germany) was unfairly criticised in the German media but was hugely effective for his team. **Diego Lugano** (Uruguay) provided guts and leadership, while **Gerard Pique** (Spain) has developed into a world-class defender.

Lucio (Brazil) and **Carles Puyol** (Spain) gave their teams an extra dimension. Lucio with his galloping forward runs, Puyol with the header that took Spain into their first World Cup Final.

AT THE RISK OF being accused of a Capello-like lack of sophistication, 4-4-2 is the chosen formation for this team, with one defensive midfielder and three wide or attacking midfielders. Such a system allows us to select the outstanding performers of the tournament.

Whether the coach of the tournament – take your pick from Marcelo Bielsa, Joachim Low, Bert Van Marwijk or Vicente Del Bosque – would be happy with it, remains to be seen.

Defensive midfielder

Sami Khedira (Germany) was one of the revelations of the tournament, stepping in to support his side with excellent technique and vision. **Gilberto Silva** (Brazil) provided security and stability until the final half-hour against Holland. **Sergio Busquets** and **Xabi Alonso** (both Spain) were vital components in a midfield that proved too clever and too quick for most of its opponents.

Bastian Schweinsteiger (Germany) may have lost out to Spain in the semi-final but he was brilliant in a new-found central role, where he rose to fill the void left by Ballack's injury.

Wide/attacking midfielders

In the early games **Landon Donovan** (USA) was a match-winner and life-saver for his country, while **Keisuke Honda** (Japan) demonstrated what a gem the Japanese have. **Matias Fernandez** (Chile) sparkled in his country's attacking line-up. **Arjen Robben** (Holland) missed his country's first two games but had a dramatic impact thereafter. **Mesut Ozil** (Germany) was brilliant against England and Argentina, while **Lionel Messi** (Argentina) did not have a bad tournament but failed to score and lacked support when he needed it most. **Andres Iniesta** (Spain) began slowly but was a star in the knockout stages and scored the winner in the Final.

Wesley Sneijder (Holland) continued the World Cup where he had left off in the Champions League for Internazionale. Great vision, excellent technique and terrific attitude combined to make an outstanding contribution to Holland's campaign.

Xavi (Spain) took time to establish himself but showed with his passing and all-round intelligent playmaking that he has no equal in the world game.

Thomas Muller (Germany) showed that technique, application and football intelligence are what matter, whatever your age. Winner of the Golden Boot, with five goals and more assists than David Villa and Diego Forlan.

Forwards

In the group stages, **Gonzalo Higuain** (Argentina) enjoyed a hat-trick as his side revelled in their attacking outlook. **Alexis Sanchez** (Chile) was an exciting front man for the most ambitious side in the competition and **Asamoah Gyan** (Ghana) showed ferocious talent despite his last-second penalty miss against Uruguay. **Carlos Tevez** (Argentina) scored an outstanding second goal against Mexico, while **Luis Fabiano** (Brazil) was involved in all of the best Brazilian moves. **Miroslav Klose** (Germany) equalled Ronaldo's World Cup record but was well marshalled by Spain in the semi-final.

Diego Forlan (Uruguay) gave his country the attacking direction they needed and won the Golden Ball for player of the tournament.

David Villa (Spain) showed incredible all-round approach play and proved once again why he is regarded as the world's best finisher, his goals single-handedly taking Spain to their first World Cup Final.

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Unbeaten...New Zealand's Tony Lochhead (left) and Tommy Smith keep Vincenzo Iaquinta of Italy in check

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Team by team

The 32 finalists - as they went out of the competition

First-round exit

CAMEROON

The first team to go out of the competition and a big disappointment. Some questionable selection decisions by coach Paul Le Guen, notably leaving Alexandre Song out of the opening match against Japan. They never recovered from that loss and threw away a promising lead against Denmark. Always faced an uphill struggle. A verbal scrap between Samuel Eto'o and Roger Milla was an unnecessary distraction but an indication of the tensions simmering beneath the surface.

NORTH KOREA

We didn't know what to expect, especially when they named a striker as third-choice goalkeeper. But after an understandably defensive display against Brazil, they showed some attacking ambition against Portugal before their second-half capitulation.

FRANCE

A textbook example of how not to conduct yourself during a tournament. Everything that could go wrong did go wrong. The coach was responsible for selection and tactical mistakes, and capped a miserable time by refusing to shake Carlos Alberto Parreira's hand after elimination. The players chipped in with petty squabbles and leaks to the media. Wholescale renewal needed under new coach Laurent Blanc.

SOUTH AFRICA

Better than expected but not good enough to reach the second round. The first host not to make it out of the opening phase. Attention now turns to Parreira's successor, who is likely to be his assistant Pitso Mosimane, and the African Nations Cup qualifiers.

GREECE

Won their first-ever game at the World Cup finals, against Nigeria, but never came close to repeating the feat of winning Euro 2004. With coach Otto Rehhagel having quit, new national boss Fernando Santos is likely to stick with Dimitris Salpigidis and youngsters Vasilis Torosidis and Socrates Papastathopoulos, but older players such as Giourkas Seitaridis, Christos Patsatzoglou, Angelos Charisteas and Kostas Katsouranis were disappointing.

NIGERIA

The goalkeeping of Vincent Enyeama was all that stood between Nigeria and humiliation at times and they also threw away a great position against Greece. The Super Eagles missed the injured Jon Obi Mikel but ultimately, the gamble on appointing Swedish coach Lars Lagerback in February ahead of the finals failed to pay off. This is a generation with little of the guile of previous World Cup campaigners from the populous west African nation.

Hero...Siphiwe Tshabalala (right) scored South Africa's opening goal of the 2010 World Cup finals

Saving face...Nigeria's Enyeama

SLOVENIA

Won their first game at a World Cup and were seconds away from reaching the second round. Miso Brecko, Samir Handanovic and Valter Birsa did well; Marko Suler and Andraz Kirm did not.

ALGERIA

Coach Rabah Saadane tinkered with the team that did so well at the African Nations Cup, with captain Yazid Mansouri not given any playing time. Never recovered from the goalkeeping error by Faouzi Chaouchi that led to defeat in the opener against Slovenia.

AUSTRALIA

A huge disappointment after the progress made in 2006. Never recovered from the opening drubbing by Germany. Coach Pim Verbeek moved on, with discussion raging about who to appoint to bring young blood and an attacking edge to the Socceroos.

SERBIA

A campaign that promised so much after impressive form in qualification ended with frustration at a penalty not awarded against Australia. Vladimir Stojkovic performed well, as did Milos Krasic and Milan Jovanovic, but Marko Pantelic and Nikola Zigic disappointed.

DENMARK

A very average, nondescript tournament. They recovered from a poor start against Holland to beat Cameroon, but were then undone by Japanese set-pieces in their final game. Defender Simon Kjaer was hugely impressive in his two games and was missed against Japan, and veteran Dennis Rommedahl also did well. Keeper Thomas Sorensen was a let down, as was Christian Poulsen.

NEW ZEALAND

A job well done for Ricki Herbert and his 2,000-1 outsiders. Amazingly, they were the only unbeaten team in the tournament. Captain Ryan Nelsen led by example, while Winston Reid, Shane Smeltz, Simon Elliott, Mark Paston and Tommy Smith did not look out of place.

ITALY

Disaster for the *Azzurri* as the defending champions went out in the opening round. Wrong selections by Marcello Lippi and poor performances by the players. Major changes now expected under new coach Cesare Prandelli.

IVORY COAST

Africa's great hope ultimately disappointed though they were in the toughest of opening groups. Sven Goran Eriksson had some impact after just thee weeks of preparations, the switch of Didier Zokora from midfield hard man to central defence solving, for the most part, a long standing weakness in the Elephants' make-up.

SWITZERLAND

Sprung the shock of the tournament by beating Spain but that was as good as it got. Strong defensive outlook – they broke Italy's record for the longest period without conceding a goal at a World Cup, 558 minutes – but they lacked punch in attack.

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HONDURAS

First tournament for 28 years – and it showed. Failed to score in 270 minutes of tournament football but Noel Valladares produced some outstanding goalkeeping to keep the score down against Chile.

Second-round fallers

SOUTH KOREA

Made proper progress outside of Asia for the first time, with their Europe-based stars Park Ji-sung, Park Chu-young and Lee Chung-yong rising to the occasion. Goalkeeping misjudgement by Jung Sung-ryong cost them dear against Uruguay.

USA

Topped their group after last-minute drama and looked capable of going further but defensive slips against Ghana cost them dear. Landon Donovan added to his stock but the future of coach Bob Bradley was uncertain.

ENGLAND

Heavily backed but surprised everybody by failing so dramatically. The team appeared fearful of failure, according to Fabio Capello they were tired and key man Wayne Rooney was never fully fit. Finishing second in their group meant they had to face Germany rather than Ghana, with Argentina and Spain in wait down the line if they had been successful. They fell to the first good team they faced.

On form...Chile's Alexis Sanchez (in white)

MEXICO

Produced entertaining patterns of play, particularly through Giovani Dos Santos, without overpowering any teams. Unlucky to come up against an Argentina team who took advantage of a poor offside decision.

SLOVAKIA

A young and purposeful side who reached the knockout stage in their first World Cup. Marek Hamsik confirmed his talent and the likes of Vladimir Weiss and Miroslav Stoch will surely make progress in club football.

CHILE

Talented players organised in attacking fashion by maverick coach Marcelo Bielsa, who refused to compromise even when reduced to 10 men against Spain.

JAPAN

Coach Takeshi Okada's prediction of a semi-final proved too much. But like South Korea, they made huge strides forwards with a young generation, typified by Keisuke Honda.

Qualifiers...Paraguay's Cristian Riveros (left) and Jan Durica of Slovakia

Beaten quarter-finalists

PORTUGAL

Drawn in a tough opening group but they never looked like making a splash, even after scoring seven times against North Korea. Lacked the midfield know-how to link their solid defence to the attack, though left-back Fabio Coentrao impressed.

BRAZIL

Had looked indestructible early on in the competition and seemed all set for the final four until defensive mistakes and indiscipline led to their self-destruction in the second half against Holland. Easy to say in hindsight that they had no Plan B, but that's not surprising considering how effective Plan A was for the past three years.

GHANA

Africa's only success story, the Black Stars were a crossbar away from becoming the first team from the continent to reach a World Cup semi-final. Coach Milovan Rajevac deserved praise for giving youth their chance and leaving established names such as Sulley Muntari and Stephen Appiah on the bench.

ARGENTINA

After a shambolic qualifying campaign, Diego Maradona's team defied the sceptics in the group stages of the finals, where the defence and midfield was sufficiently solid to aid a three-pronged attack built around Lionel Messi. But in the knockout phase the coach's charisma was not enough to take them through against a Germany team who pinpointed their weakness – the front three's reluctance to track back and defend – and ruthlessly exploited it.

PARAGUAY

Effective without ever being inspirational. Their unhindered progress through the group stages and victory on penalties over Japan provided ammunition for those who argued that, with four teams in the last eight, South American sides would dominate the tournament. They were unfortunate to have a good goal disallowed against Spain in the quarter-finals but ultimately their attack lacked a cutting edge.

Fourth place

URUGUAY

Their unexpected passage to the semi-finals showed the good and bad side of the game. In Diego Forlan, they had a player who exemplified the virtues of hard work and fair play, allied to considerable talent. In Luis Suarez, they had a gifted player whose handball cheated Ghana out of a semi-final place.

Third-place

GERMANY

Hit by injuries to key players immediately before the tournament, Joachim Low's young side proved greater than the sum of their parts. Played with technique, intelligence and a simple counter-attacking gameplan.

Runners-up

HOLLAND

Bert Van Marwijk risked committing football heresy by constructing a team built on pragmatic principles, typified by the aggressive midfield play of Mark Van Bommel. Such tactics took them to their third World Cup Final, but an overtly physical approach against Spain was to prove their undoing.

Spain's winner...Andres Iniesta

Winners

SPAIN

No team had ever won the World Cup after losing their first game, as Spain did to Switzerland, but Vicente Del Bosque's side stuck to their principles of possession football and rightly claimed their first world title.

Gavin Hamilton

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A-Z of the 2010 World Cup

From Abreu to Zakumi, all the people and puppets that mattered

A is for Sebastian Abreu *and his cheeky chipped penalty for Uruguay against Ghana.*

B is for *Bafana Bafana*, *who failed to make the second round, but united a nation behind them.*

C is for cameras. *The debate on goal-line technology will only intensify after controversial incidents in South Africa.*

D is for Diego. *Maradona the coach could not match Maradona the player, but it was hugely entertaining while it lasted.*

E is for empty seats *at all stadiums. Why did FIFA not fill the gaps with local kids or volunteers?*

F is for flops. *An XI of players who failed to live up to their billing: Sorensen - Zambrotta, Cannavaro, Terry, Evra - Gerrard, Veron, Ribery - Rooney, Anelka, Iaquinta.*

G is for goals, *145 of them in total.*

H is for holding midfielders. *England didn't need them. Spain had two.*

I is for injuries *that deprived the World Cup of talents such as Michael Essien, John Obi Mikel, Michael Ballack, Lassana Diarra, Rene Adler (and arguably Wayne Rooney and Fernando Torres, too).*

J is for Jabulani, *the ball that launched a thousand controversies and gave goalkeepers sleepless nights.*

K is for Klose. *The Germany striker equalled Ronaldo's record of World Cup finals goals with his 14th.*

L is for Larrionda, *the Uruguayan ref who missed what the rest of the world saw: Frank Lampard's goal for England against Germany.*

M is for Mandela. *The 91-year-old father of the nation was too frail to attend any games until an emotional appearance at Soccer City before the Final.*

N is for Nike, *whose curse struck Rooney, Ronaldinho, Cristiano Ronaldo...and Holland in the Final.*

Top pundit...Paul the octopus

O is for octopus. *The fate of Paul, the nautical Nostradamus, was uncertain after he predicted Germany's defeat by Spain.*

P is for police, *an extra 40,000 of them were out and about on South Africa's streets.*

Q is for the big question: *will Brazil be ready in time for the next World Cup in 2014?*

R is for records. *English journalist David Miller attended his 14th World Cup, equalling the mark of Northern Ireland's Malcolm Brodie.*

S is for Sandton, *the suburb of Johannesburg where FIFA execs stayed in five-star luxury. Bring the World Cup to Africa, but only if we don't have to slum it.*

T is for Twitter, *all the instant news and World Cup views that 140 characters can handle.*

U is for unlikely stars. *Thomas Muller... Keisuke Honda... Kevin-Prince Boateng.*

V is for vuvuzelas, *the sound of this World Cup. Fantastic in the stadiums, infuriating everywhere else.*

W is for wardrobes, *notably that of the German coaching team, who were resplendent in matching knitwear.*

X is for X-rated tackles, *of which there were surprisingly few... until the Final. Brazil's Felipe Melo (sent off against Holland) and Mark Van Bommel (unpunished against Uruguay) were two of the exceptions.*

Y is for youth. *Germany's starlets and Ghana's Black Stars proved that international football is now, more than ever, a young man's game.*

Z is for Zakumi, *the omnipresent World Cup mascot.*

Gavin Hamilton

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POST-MORTEM

The beautiful game...has FIFA taken its eye off the ball when it comes to what makes a great World Cup?

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Can we have our game back?

FIFA has lost sight of what the World Cup is supposed to be about

AT THE RISK of being considered a heretic, please can we have our football back? That spherical object which the World Cup, intrinsically, is supposed to be all about.

Anyone who has just lived through the 2010 finals in South Africa will tell you that the tournament was about a myriad of many laudable issues (Football For Hope, 1Goal, etc) and others less than distinguished...but what it was not ever about, principally, was the football.

My perception – and I was there from before the start until after the finish – was that if anyone in authority had been paying serious attention to the football itself they would have emerged kicking themselves for losing sight of the goal.

The quality of the games – not that some people noticed, as they were too busy indulging in self-congratulation over their political vision or development programmes – was poor.

How many memorable games? How many great goals? How many great saves? How many eye-popping individual performances? Very, very few in any category.

A modicum of drama was to be had: Uruguay's cheat-assisted overturning of Ghana; South Africa's victorious exit against France; England's "ghost" goal. But these were isolated incidents created mostly by competition formula, not by football of itself.

I write this not with any ill-will towards football today, FIFA or South Africa. I write as someone who has followed this journey probably more closely than any other World Cup, but who ended up with serious misgivings about the manner in which it was kidnapped by men, women and corporates with other agendas.

FIFA insiders, in private conversation, conceded their concern about the quality of the football but dared not say so in public. The truth is that the quality of "the brand" has diminished with every succeeding increase in the number of teams competing. Quite simply, the expansion may mean more games and thus more commercial income, but at the price of lower standards.

Once again, the group stages produced some of the better football. In a reversal of yesteryear, the knockout stages generated lower-quality, fear-factor football. I have pointed this out many times before and I accept that change is impossible. But the World Cup is the apex of the game and everyone all the way down is tarnished by poor quality at the top.

That is bad for the game and, in point of long-term fact, bad for FIFA and its swarm of commercial partners.

Football back at the epicentre

This concern is not being expressed from some polar point of distant distraction. I was there when South Africa campaigned for the World Cup; I was there when South Africa lost the World Cup and then when South Africa was awarded the World Cup.

I was there for the original qualifying draw, I was there for the Confederations Cup, I was there for the finals draw and I have spent significant time there inbetween.

I saw new stadia springing from building site to glorious amphitheatre: the "giraffe" stadium in Nelspruit, Cape Town's Green Point in the shadow of Table Mountain, the drawn-out Calabash creation which is Soccer City, and my personal favourite, the magnificent Moses Mabhida in Durban which will one day – in my opinion – welcome the Olympic Games into Africa for the first time.

Now I have seen the closing of the African World Cup. It served many purposes. But the World Cup needs to put football back at the epicentre.

Cut back on the political glad-handing; cut back on all the promotional receptions and, yes, the press conferences.

Get on with the game and think about the central issues to progress the football at this tarnished pinnacle: overhaul the over-intense match schedule and the insulting nonsense of a new ball right on top of the finals themselves. And yes, bring on as soon as possible the technological assistance which FIFA and IFAB, kicking and screaming, are finally having to confront.

Of course, beyond the facts and figures, the World Cup is also about people and the lives it affects.

Danny Jordaan, the personable and hard-working organising chief executive, had long mused about the enormous sense of depression which would hit South Africa on July 12, the day after the World Cup Final.

For hundreds of his fellow countrymen that depression had struck home even earlier as the tournament contracted and the various stadia closed down in sequence.

The "legacy factor" – that great, overblown cliche which weighs on all such events now, and from which South Africa and South Africans should profit – is absolutely impossible to evaluate.

The concept is to imbue any bidding federation and/or city and/or country with an understanding of the need to tip its hat to social responsibility by investing in youth/education/facilities programmes which will continue to provide local benefits long after the World Cup circus has left town.

This is not easy to define in terms of the 2010 Word Cup because of the variety of sectors involved: national

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Traffic...on the road in Cape Town

Security...riot police deal with protesting stadium workers in Durban

infrastructure, sporting infrastructure, tourism, security, employment, and social welfare (education, health, etc) both within South Africa and sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, plus the value of intangibles (national pride, purpose and unity plus international perceptions).

The recessionary forces which reduced the number of visitors – little more than 200,000 above the usual figure for June/July – eased concerns over accommodation and transport. Yes, prices trebled all over the place but that is a free-market inevitability when any major event hits town.

A negative in terms of accommodation was that many people who had upgraded their homes to offer bed-and-breakfast provision were left with the bills but no clientele.

Meanwhile, a positive in terms of transport – in a country with no European-style inter-city rail system – was the success in upgrading trunk roads, but the airlines and airports struggled to cope under pressure (most notably Durban for the Spain-Holland semi-final).

Security had been the main issue of international concern up until the last months before kick-off when transport and accommodation took over. In truth, the security issue was less troubling than expected though a number of teams (England and Uruguay included) had their hotel rooms assailed.

One reason was the creation by the South African government of "World Cup courts" which meted out instant, draconian punishments: many years in jail for stealing a cellphone, for example. These sentences were well-publicised and had a cautionary effect. Around 600 incidents of World Cup-related crime were recorded, around half involving foreigners – though "foreigners" included petty thieves and criminals from local, neighbouring states.

Secondly, the South African Police Service took on thousands of new recruits and trained them up to new standards of efficiency, responsibility and behaviour. Not only that, but the extra numbers brought a far more visible level of policing to the World Cup cities, streets.

Whether this will all add up to anything more than a fig leaf on the issue of South African crime levels is questionable.

Benefit of the World Cup

However, ask South Africans to name a benefit of the World Cup and most responded not in terms of improved security or better roads or a stronger economy (even if only temporarily). They answered: unity. Never before had one event provided a single simultaneous focus for the country's disparate racial, cultural, religious and linguistic groupings.

However, football is also supposed to benefit from a legacy factor in terms of event organisation and profitability, as well as the game's technical development. That depends, amid all the fuss and fury and promotional smoke and mirrors, on senior directors and officials not losing sight of the fact that the World Cup is, has been and always will be, first and foremost, a football tournament.

So, how far has the 2010 World Cup taken association football? Has it moved the game forward? What was good, what was bad, what was learned, how can it progress?

As noted, the quality of the football was largely mediocre. This is not to discount or disparage the amount of effort put in by all the competing teams, their coaches and players. This was probably the most physically intense and fittest World Cup yet with the results evidencing a levelling-up process across all the continents.

> "Football is also supposed to benefit from a legacy factor"

Truly memorable moments were very few and far between, while the most highly vaunted "superstars" – with the exception of Argentina's Leo Messi – sunk far beneath their reputations, and it was left to the emergent talent, with Germany's Thomas Muller leading the way, to rise in part to fill a vacuum of popular and media demand.

Fuss over the Jabulani ball did not help. South Africa was a complex place to take so many of the world's finest players because the variety of altitudes and climate meant an inherent challenge to technique. The thinner air at altitude caused problems which the new ball exacerbated.

Next time around FIFA should start any new ball in the qualifying competition. It's an insult to players

Failing to perform...Rooney

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A rare success...Messi

and fans and the World Cup itself to enforce the introduction of a new ball right on top of the tournament.

Tactically, developments were limited to detail. One of the reasons for the dearth of goals, down around the lowest rates for World Cups, was the preponderance of 4-2-3-1 tactical formations. It stands to reason that teams with only one full-time striker will not produce high-scoring entertaining football.

Increased fitness levels enhance the level of attacking support out of midfield but that can be only sporadic.

The tetchy, below-scale performances of Cristiano Ronaldo, Kaka and – most notably – Wayne Rooney were a major disappointment. It's no excuse to blame over-expectation or a stressful European season or the draining weight of responsibility which now attaches to Champions League competition. Those factors were not a hindrance for the likes of Philipp Lahm, Diego Forlan, Arjen Robben, Wesley Sneijder or the stars of Barcelona.

Fernando Torres and Robin Van Persie deserve special exemption for struggling to find the goals which Liverpool and Arsenal fans might have expected. Both were handicapped by returning so late in the season after surgery that, while they were physically match-fit, they were not match-sharp.

Confidence being such a crucial part of a striker's make-up, Torres grew more depressed and off-target the longer the tournament went on without him being able to put the ball in the back of the net. Hence his fury when Pedro – in the closing minutes against Germany in the semis – failed selfishly to play him free in front of a gaping goal.

In this sphere the media also shares the blame in over-hyping the players and maybe even, to some extent, the standard of the event. The dislocation with reality this engenders was evidenced when Ronaldo announced the birth of his son but then demanded "respect" for his privacy. Sure – and let the media also keep silent about the identities of the sponsors which literally enrich Ronaldo's life, too.

Impossibly high expectations

My personal opinion is that the so-called "new stars" such as Muller and Keisuke Honda of Japan rose to fill a hot-air (media) vacuum created by the failure of Kaka, Cristiano Ronaldo and Wayne Rooney to live up to our (the media's) impossibly high expectations.

Perhaps some of the players and managers lost their focus – and the gloss off their reputations – by ignoring the fact that the World Cup is not only the month of the finals, it's the work invested in the two previous years.

England and France were two examples of a failure to invest in significant long-term planning.

Africa's failure to provide a mere one team for the knockout stage was a major disappointment. Various factors were blamed, from pressure of expectation to the usual short-term appointments of foreign managers. Personally I thought a number of players in different squads were guilty of over-confidence: they thought that, since this was "the African World Cup" all they had to do was turn up and opponents would fall at their feet.

No such luck and Africa could not really argue if it loses a place for the next World Cup in 2014 to Asia, which produced two knockout qualifiers (Japan and South Korea) from a smaller, four-team base, with Australia only falling short of making it three on goal difference.

South America progressed four teams to the quarter-finals for the first time and will benefit in 2014 from the extra place gained due to Brazil being hosts and, one hopes, worthy hosts at that. Certainly there could be no better venue for FIFA to turn the spotlight back on the football.

Come to think of it, one or two of the nations bidding to host the 2018 or 2022 World Cups could do a lot worse than promote a mission statement emphasising the need to "put football first".

Too many more football tournaments like 2010 and people may suddenly find that Emperor Football has no clothes. ●

"Torres returned so late in the season after surgery that he was not match-fit"

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Dunga pays the price of failure

Sacked with undue haste, the *Selecao* coach is inevitably seen as the villain of the piece

THE LINE BETWEEN success and failure can be agonisingly thin. A goal up in the first half of their quarter-final against Holland, Brazil produced one of the moves of the tournament: Robinho dribbled past two players, Luis Fabiano flicked a lay off and Kaka curled a delightful shot towards the far top corner.

If Maarten Stekelenburg had not managed to push it round for a corner, Dunga would have been sitting pretty – two goals up and in total command, with Kaka coming into form and his "discovery" Felipe Melo laying on a superb pass for the opening goal.

Instead of which, little more than an hour later the dream had fallen in on top of Brazil's coach. He became the villain of the piece, along with Felipe Melo, sent off in the second half, and who on his return to Brazil had to be smuggled out of Rio de Janeiro airport as if he were a thief.

Since the defeat, the defenders of Ronaldinho, Neymar and Ganso have appeared to say that everything would have been different had they been present. Perhaps. But this view overlooks the fate of the star-studded 2006 team and the fact that the Santos youngsters hardly set the planet alight in the World Under-17 and Under-20 tournaments.

And whatever one thinks of Dunga's strategy and selection, the players he took to South Africa achieved excellent results for two years before the competition and, especially in the first half against Holland, were looking a good bet to win the title. Yet these same players suffered an extraordinary emotional collapse, sparking intense debate in Brazil. It was thought the mental approach of the team was one of its main strengths; instead, they self-destructed with astonishing speed.

Since setting the emotional tone is one of the key tasks of the coach, Dunga has carried the bulk of the blame. It was a moment when inexperience showed. Unable to control his anger when the pressure was on, an uptight coach produced an uptight team.

The Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) made no secret of the fact that it shared this analysis. With unusual haste a statement was issued sacking not only Dunga but his entire back-up staff. Dunga's contract was at an end and he would have gone anyway – either on a high as a winner or, as it happened, as the villain. The big loser was his assistant, Jorginho, the favourite to step up to the top job had things gone better in South Africa.

Brazil are in a rush to appoint a new man – they have a friendly against the USA in early August – but the idea is that he will be there for the long haul.

> **"Felipe Melo had to be smuggled out of Rio de Janeiro airport as if he were a thief"**

Big rebuilding job

The 2010 side was one of the oldest Brazil have ever taken to a World Cup and few of them will be around in 2014. A big rebuilding job is necessary and, as hosts, Brazil will not have the undoubted benefit of participating in the world's most competitive qualifying campaign next time.

The thinking of the CBF is that the new coach will concentrate on grooming young players and he will take charge of the Under-20 side, and the Under-23s in the Olympics, preparing a new generation for the next World Cup.

In theory, short-term results are not important, but in practice this will not be easy to administer. A Brazil coach will always be under pressure for results, no matter how young and experimental his team.

But the real pressure, of course, will come in four years. If Dunga and company found South Africa 2010 too much to cope with, it will be nothing compared to the demands that a nation of nearly 200 million will heap on the hosts in 2014. ●

Flight to oblivion...Dunga prepares to board the plane at Johannesburg airport knowing full well the knives will be out back home

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Shame and disgrace

The World Cup holders' failure to reach the second stage exposes current inadequacies

ITALY

PADDY AGNEW in Rome

PERHAPS THE MOST telling image linked to Italy's World Cup debacle in South Africa came via a front-page cartoon in the Berlusconi family-owned daily *Il Giornale* on the morning after that ignominious 3-2 defeat by Slovakia.

The cartoonist Forattini had drawn a football pitch with the players lined out in a 4-3-3 formation. There was one significant difference, however. Instead of players, Forattini had placed 11 coffins on the pitch. With the Italian flag flying at half mast on the sidelines, the implication was that this was a national tragedy.

And so, to some extent, it was. On the Friday morning after the Slovakia defeat, the banner headlines were clearly not flattering: "The Blackest Day Of Our (Footballing) History" (*La Stampa*), "Tutto Nero" (*Gazzetta dello Sport*), "Shame" (*Corriere dello Sport*), "Italian Debacle, Eliminated Without Honour" (*Il Messaggero*) and "Worse Than Korea '66" (*Corriere della Sera*).

Italy fans had never held out much hope for this team. However, as captain Fabio Cannavaro said on the morning after the Slovakia game, he expected Italy to get through the first round, even if they might be eliminated soon after.

Italy's worst World Cup performance since Northern Ireland kept them out of the 1958 finals in Sweden was, to a certain extent, a debacle that could be seen coming from a long way off. Put simply, one never had even the slightest feeling that coach Marcello Lippi really believed he could do anything other than limit the damages and save face. Embarrassingly, the defending world champions failed to do even that.

Amid the acres of newsprint and hours of TV analysis, commentators tended to agree on a number of issues.

Number one defendant in the dock was, of course, Lippi, who was widely perceived to have been arrogant and mistaken in his decision to leave talent such as Antonio Cassano, Mario Balotelli and Fabrizio Miccoli at home.

"The federation's problem was that they abdicated their role as the leaders of the national team, allowing that to be stolen from them by the omnipotent Lippi," wrote Fabrizio Bocca in *La Repubblica*. "Then they did not understand – or perhaps they agreed with the decision of the 2006-winning coach not to construct a new national team, not to innovate, but rather to hatch up the maddest scheme whereby Italy went to South Africa with the 2006 players – nine out of the 23, but nearly all of them first choices."

Post-Berlin years

In reality, Italy's current inadequacies go far beyond Cassano and Balotelli, or the lack of. Ageing stadia, occasional match-fixing, violent fans and economic quasi-meltdown have been par for the course in these "glorious" post-Berlin years.

Italy's success four years ago masked the reality of the problems back home. The failure, twice, to land the hosting of the European Championship finals (2012 and 2016) sounded another unheeded alarm bell. It was not for nothing that Italian football's greatest success last season, namely Internazionale's Champions League win, was achieved with a team containing not a single Italian player.

Nor can anyone suggest that Italian football has been penalised by making too much space for foreign players. Forty one per cent of those who play in Serie A are ineligible to play for Italy, yet that compares favourably to England, France and Germany where the foreign quota is 62, 42 and 49 per cent respectively.

Perhaps more indicative is the percentage of players who graduate from Serie A youth teams to the first team. In Italy, former youth-team players counted for 8.1 per cent of those in Serie A last season, compared to 26.8 in France, 21.8 in Spain, 17.8 in Germany and 16.5 in England.

Under pressure...Slovakia's Robert Vittek (in white) causes problems for Italy's defence

> "Italy's success four years ago masked the reality of the problems back home"

This was touched on by Cannavaro when he said: "I just hope that the big clubs realise that the national team's failure is also their failure."

There was a time when the Italy Under-21s were a shoe-in to win the European Championship, having lifted the title five times between 1992 and 2004. Since then, the best Italy have done was reach the semi-finals under Pierluigi Casiraghi last year.

So, where does Italy go from here? Firstly, it goes to ex-Fiorentina coach Cesare Prandelli, whose appointment was announced before the World Cup, with some suggesting the squad's poor performance was linked to the fact the players knew they were playing for a coach on his way out.

Prandelli has done a good job with Fiorentina and there is no reason why he should not do an even better one with Italy. He can be expected to ring the changes – Gaetano D'Agostino (Fiorentina), Alberto Aquilani (Liverpool), Andrea Poli (Sampdoria), Davide Biondini (Cagliari), Daniele Galloppa (Parma), Davide Santon (Internazionale), Giuseppe Rossi (Villarreal) and Lorenzo De Silvestri (Fiorentina), as well as Cassano and Balotelli may come into the reckoning.

Prandelli has a four-year contract with the obvious expectation being that he can construct a team that will prove competitive in Brazil in 2014.

He certainly has plenty of work in front of him. ●

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This year's model

Joachim Low has steered the *Nationalmannschaft* in an exciting new direction

THE DIEHARD likes of Schalke boss Felix Magath and former Werder Bremen, Kaiserslautern and Greece coach Otto Rehhagel might enjoy pouring scorn on the frenzied bout of celebration and hero-worship sparked by Germany's semi-final defeats at this and the last World Cup; in their eyes, trophies are the only items worth taking as a reference to the pearly gates. But if any group of players and coaches deserve the bunting and the ticker tape, it is this year's *Nationalmannschaft* model.

Widely tipped to be heading for a South African fall after losing a gaggle of key players to injury this spring – notably skipper Michael Ballack, goalkeeper Rene Adler, multi-purpose defender Heiko Westermann and midfield holder Simon Rolfes – not only did a young and relatively inexperienced squad reach the World Cup semi-finals for the 11th time, they achieved it with zest, dash and ingenuity – qualities used sparingly in the national team Jurgen Klinsmann took over as *Bundestrainer* in 2004.

If Germany are no more the archetypal tournament plodders, the experts in grind-it-out functionality, this revolution of style is down to one man: head coach Joachim "Yogi" Low.

Although Klinsmann's second in command, his status as the tactical power behind the throne was never in doubt and since assuming full control four years ago he has continued to prove himself one of the sharpest strategists around, a deep thinker, whose Xs and the Ys on the chalkboard invariably make total sense.

Yes, he had a degree of good fortune in the 2010 knockout rounds as England and Argentina's barn-door defences and tendency to over-commit in the attacking phase were bound to catch up with them sooner or later. Yet the best way to win still has to be found and Low's counter-attacking gameplans for those matches were masterclasses in their attention to detail and conception. Klinsmann once said he had never met anyone as gifted as Low at turning footballing theory into practice. How right he was.

Absolutely correct when he decided half-way through Euro 2008 to abandon his country's obsession with 4-4-2 in favour of the far more flexible and balanced 4-2-3-1, Low has assembled nothing less than the most entertaining *Nationalelf* since Gunter Netzer and Franz Beckenbauer inspired West Germany to the European crown in 1972 – an enthralling mixture of the fast-paced attacking moves of the Premier League game he admires so much, a precise possession game, and the controlled aggression and discipline always part of the German DNA.

And he certainly had the personnel to make it work at this World Cup. Bastian Schweinsteiger as the brilliant creative quarterback, the fulcrum the entire offensive unit revolves around; the excellent all-round game of his central midfield alter-ego Sami Khedira; the subtlety on the ball and superb movement in the hole of Mesut Ozil; the sharpness and work ethic of lone striker Miroslav Klose; and the complimentary wing threat: the left-sided forcefulness of Lukas Podolski and the more fluid running and ball-skills of Thomas Muller on the right.

> "Not only did a young squad reach the World Cup semi-finals for the 11th time, they achieved it with zest, dash and ingenuity"

Much of the credit for Germany's march to the last four in South Africa has been attributed to the brave and bold integration of the 21-year-old Muller plus four members of last summer's European Championship-winning Under-21 team (Ozil, Khedira, left-back Jerome Boateng and keeper Manuel Neuer). But let no one claim that their inclusion was part of a rejuvenation drive on the part of Low.

Fourth choice

Adler, not Neuer, would have stood between the posts had a cracked rib not intervened, Boateng might not have made the squad if Westermann was fit, and the same applies to Khedira, who would have been fourth-choice behind Ballack, Schweinsteiger and Rolfes.

Rather than injuries hampering Germany's chances, they ended up enhancing them and the perfect example is that of Ballack. On hearing of the great man's unavailability, many in Germany thought the end was nigh, only for Khedira to come in and help turn them into a far quicker and more incisive attacking force. With Ballack in tow, they would have had more control but also more of a handbrake.

For all the praise of grass-roots coaching, the physical conditioning of the players and the self-perpetuating aura of invincibility instilled in every international at a major tournament, one of the biggest factors in Germany's success was something they had no control over: a spate of call-offs. Necessity meant the selection net was cast wider – to great effect. ●

Star turns...Muller (left) and Schweinsteiger

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Still waiting

With only one team making it through to the knockout stage, Africa again disappointed

IT HAD BEEN hoped Africa's first World Cup would be the stage for a serious tilt at unprecedented performances for the continent; in the end, it served only to reinforce all the old stereotypes about poor preparation and bungled opportunity.

A record six African sides competed – the extra number coming from hosts South Africa – but the return remained the same as in previous editions, with just a single side making it into the knockout phase.

Ghana did reach the quarter-finals, and in so doing became only the third African side to claim a place in the last eight, but by missing a last-minute penalty they rendered the overall return a flop rather than a success.

The width of the crossbar stood between the Black Stars and a new benchmark, and had Asamoah Gyan converted his spot-kick, and handed Ghana victory over Uruguay, the failings of the other five would have been swiftly forgotten.

Algeria, Cameroon and Nigeria limped out without winning a game, while Ivory Coast and South Africa were effectively eliminated after losing their second matches. Ghana did progress through their group, albeit with just four points and on the back of two penalties. It wasn't until Kevin-Prince Boateng fired in an early strike against the USA in the second round that they scored their first outfield goal – and went on to seal a dramatic extra-time winner to match the achievements of Cameroon in1990 and Senegal in 2002.

The quarter-final tie against Uruguay at Soccer City is certain to go down in World Cup legend and Ghana's defeat was a devastating blow for a team already punching way above their division, particularly with the absence through injury of midfielder Michael Essien.

Africa's big-name stars will look back with equal disappointment at their own impact, save perhaps for a brave effort from Didier Drogba, who broke a bone in his forearm on the eve of the tournament yet played with a plaster cast and was even able to score.

The Ivorians had the toughest of a hard series of draws for the African sides and, even though they made a positive start against Portugal, the subsequent defeat by Brazil left them effectively out of the running, particularly after the Portuguese thrashed North Korea.

Sven Goran Eriksson's fellow Swede Lars Lagerback also tinkered extensively with Nigeria's side but he had nothing of the same impact – although they do want him to stay on as their coach for the next four years.

Slinked home

The Super Eagles slinked home to the threat of a two-year ban from international competition from an irate president, Goodluck Jonathan, though he was quick to backtrack when the ramifications of a potential FIFA ban became clear.

Samuel Eto'o proved unable to pull together a divided Cameroon squad, split between the ageing and departing generation of Geremi and Rigobert Song, and a bevy of new players picked out of the blue by French coach Paul Le Guen.

Algeria were not expected to deliver much and so it proved, though their goalless draw against England was the source of intense satisfaction back home and they did play a part in a riveting finish to their last game against the United States.

Coach Rabah Saadane tinkered extensively with his side between the African Nations Cup in Angola in January, where they were semi-finalists, and the start of the World Cup, with captain Yazid Mansouri among the victims.

South Africa, as expected, picked up the unenviable record of becoming the first hosts in history to fail to get past the first stage. But they did engender a massive whirl of unexpected nationalistic fervour, coming in to the tournament on a run of unbeaten performances and proving unlucky not to beat Mexico in the opening game, when Katlego Mphela hit the post at the end of the contest.

Heartbreaking...Gyan missed his penalty against Uruguay

> "Africa will find it hard to justify the right to have five places in Brazil in four years time"

But a 3-0 defeat to Uruguay, their heaviest-ever home loss, ended their hopes after only two matches and even though there was the fillip of a win over a demoralised France, their chances of progress were always slim.

Africa will find it hard to justify the right to have five places in Brazil in four years time. Since 1998, when the continent was awarded extra berths at the World Cup, only one side per tournament has made it past the first round. And the record of African teams at the last four World Cup is a paltry 14 wins in 69 matches. ●

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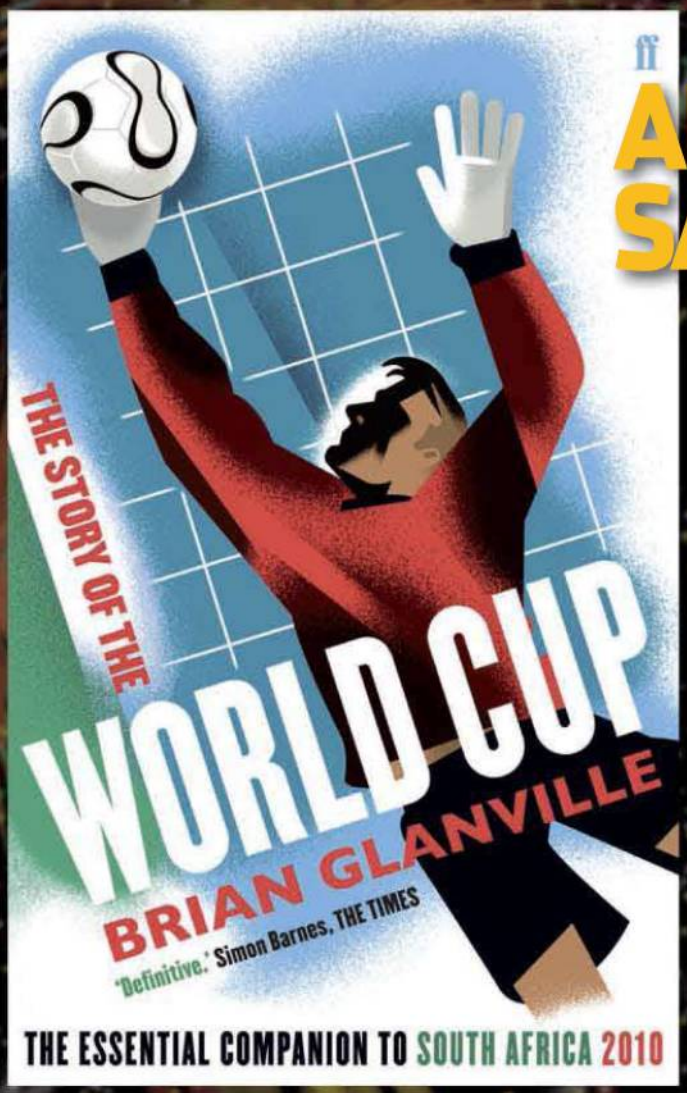

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WORLD CUP 2010 GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
URUGUAY	3	2	1	0	4	0	7
MEXICO	3	1	1	1	3	2	4
SOUTH AFRICA	3	1	1	1	3	5	4
FRANCE	3	0	1	2	1	4	1

Adieu…Sidney Govou shakes Domenech's hand, but Henry (left) and Ribery can't wait to get off the pitch after going out

France all at sea

Domenech's squabblers depart in disgrace and hosts South Africa bow out early, but Latin teams surge forward

FRANCE, RUNNERS-UP four years ago in Germany, were the first major nation to exit the tournament, self-destructing in a maelstrom of infighting and player revolt against coach Raymond Domenech's questionable tactical selections.

The French media, starved of access to the players and coach in the build-up to the tournament, feasted on a series of leaks from inside the camp. These included Franck Ribery and Yoann Gourcuff allegedly coming to blows on a plane and former great Zinedine Zidane encouraging a group of senior players (Ribery, skipper Patrice Evra, Thierry Henry and William Gallas) to petition Domenech to adopt a 4-4-2 formation. Things reached boiling point with Nicolas Anelka's foul-mouthed volley at Domenech during half-time against Mexico, resulting in him being sent home.

The unpopular Domenech was France's longest-serving coach, thanks to the support of federation boss Jean-Pierre Escalettes. But his refusal to start with Florent Malouda and Henry led to players openly questioning his methods and the Anelka controversy sparked their refusal to train before their final match, the 2-1 defeat by South Africa.

The hosts finished level on points with Mexico but with an inferior goal difference, thanks largely to a 3-0 defeat by Uruguay in their second game which killed much of the optimism sparked by the 1-1 draw with Mexico in the opening match. However, the crisis engulfing France had allowed South Africa to believe they could sneak into the last 16 with a win over *Les Bleus*, coupled with a victory for either Uruguay or Mexico in the other game.

South Africa coach Carlos Alberto Parreira bowed out having become the first man to coach at six World Cups. The Brazilian left a happy man, saying: "South Africa can be very proud of its team. If I am proud of anything it is to have given this team a face, an identity."

Uruguay, with Diego Forlan outstanding, needed only to draw with Mexico for both countries to secure their places in the second round. Any concerns of possible collusion proved unfounded as Uruguay won 1-0 to top the group.

Gavin Hamilton

> "It's shameful to lose like that"
>
> *France's Florent Malouda after his country's first-ever defeat by Mexico*

JUNE 11

SOUTH AFRICA 1 MEXICO 1

Bafana Bafana enjoy the spotlight

HISTORY was in the making no longer: the 2010 World Cup finals – the first major sports event to break through the global glass ceiling and hit the African continent – became fact with this match.

No longer was this World Cup merely the vision of Nelson Mandela, Sepp Blatter, Danny Jordaan and a host of believers. "Football Friday" has been a vibrant factor of South African daily life for a year; now it had flooded out and swept the world.

In May 2005, in Zurich, FIFA's executive committee handed Mandela the World Cup as a symbol of the future. Now the future had caught up, with South Africa – so long a pariah of world politics – the happy, cheerful centre of international attention for all the right reasons.

Saviour…Khune makes a crucial stop from Franco

After almost three hours of opening entertainment, FIFA president Blatter told the Soccer City crowd: "Here and now the FIFA World Cup is in Africa; the FIFA World Cup is in South Africa. *Ke Nako* [we are ready].

"Congratulations to the African population, congratulations to South Africa. A dream has come true. The spirit of Africa is in Soccer City."

Then it was the turn of state president Jacob Zuma, with a message from Mandela, who was absent through frail health and the overnight car-crash death of a 13-year-old great-granddaughter.

"First let me convey a message from Madiba," said Zuma. "He would be with

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us to greet you. Unfortunately there was a tragedy in the family but he said: 'The game must start, we must enjoy the game.'

"We are humbled by this moment, to host one of the great tournaments of the world. Now I am privileged to be given the opportunity to declare the 2010 FIFA World Cup open."

The opening game was brighter and more entertaining than most observers had expected, and a draw was a fair result in a sold-out stadium for a match described by Mexico boss Javier Aguirre as the most important he had ever coached.

The hosts, understandably under the weight of so much pressure and expectation, were the more nervy in the opening exchanges, while *El Tri* were altogether far more fluent. They frequently ripped through the left flank of the *Bafana Bafana* defence where Lucas Thwala was embarrassed, first by Giovani Dos Santos, then by Carlos Vela when the Arsenal man switched wings.

The "honour" of the tournament's first yellow card from referee Ravshan Irmatov, the first Uzbek to officiate at a World Cup, went to Efrain Juarez in the 18th minute for cutting out a crossfield pass with his left arm.

But otherwise it was all Mexico and only the alertness of Itu Khune saved South Africa from slipping behind as he made scrambling saves from Dos Santos and Guillermo Franco.

Khune also enjoyed a little good fortune as Dos Santos' swerving drive flew just wide, Vela had a "goal" disallowed for a close but correct offside, and Franco missed badly with a close-range header.

But coach Carlos Alberto Parreira's half-time team talk sent *Bafana Bafana* out a more confident outfit and Siphiwe Tshabalala sent the home fans into rapture when he raced on to a superb through ball from Kagisho Dikgacoi and fired past Oscar Perez's left hand for the opening goal.

Aguirre fed all his three permitted substitutes into the game in pursuit of an equaliser and was rewarded when Andres Guardado provided the angled cross which eluded the home defence and gave Rafael Marquez the opportunity to strike a deft equaliser in the 79th minute.

The otherwise unimpressive Katlego Mphela had a shot deflected against a post in the closing minutes but South Africa could be happy enough with their start.

Keir Radnedge

JUNE 11

URUGUAY 0
FRANCE 0

France frustrated by 10-man Uruguay

THE excitement of the opening match was followed by a drab, goalless stalemate in Cape Town. France were unable to make the breakthrough against a Uruguay side reduced to 10 men after Nicolas Lodeiro became the first player to be sent off in the tournament.

France had the better of the limited chances created, Sidney Govou failing to strike Franck Ribery's low cross with any conviction in the eighth minute.

For most of the match Nicolas Anelka was isolated in a lone striker role for France. Instead it was Yoann Gourcuff who went closest in the first half, testing Uruguay keeper Fernando Muslera with a cheeky free-kick from way out on the left.

At the other end, Diego Forlan forced France keeper Hugo Lloris into an excellent save after 16 minutes and had the best chance of the match late in the second half, but shot wide when unmarked.

France introduced Thierry Henry in a bid to gain some attacking urgency. But their cause would have been helped if Florent Malouda, reportedly left out of the side after a bust-up with coach Raymond Domenech, had been introduced earlier than the 75th minute.

Uruguay were happy to hold on for a point after Lodeiro, a second-half substitute, was sent off for a second yellow card after a nasty challenge on Bacary Sagna.

John Holmesdale

JUNE 16

SOUTH AFRICA 0
URUGUAY 3

Forlan leaves hosts forlorn

TWO goals from Diego Forlan and a last-minute strike by Alvaro Pereira wrapped up the worst possible outcome for South Africa on the Youth Day national holiday, held to celebrate the initial student uprising against apartheid in Soweto in 1976.

And a dire display by the hosts reached its nadir with the expulsion of keeper Itu Khune for conceding a decisive second-half penalty.

● Despite being the first coach to fail in taking a host nation to the second stage of the finals, Carlos Alberto Parreira lost just one game during his second spell in charge of South Africa.

Uruguay were positive from the start and home nerves showed in the opening minutes when playmaker Steven Pienaar was booked by referee Massimo Busacca for running out of the wall to block a Forlan free-kick.

Forlan then struck in the 24th minute when his speculative 25-yard shot took the finest of deflections off Aaron Mokoena and looped over the head of flat-footed Khune.

Luis Suarez thumped an angled shot into the side netting in the 32nd minute, while all South Africa could manage by way of response was a soft header from Katlego Mphela which looped harmlessly wide six minutes before half-time.

Suarez was a handful for the hosts as he ranged across the front of the Uruguay attack and was unlucky not to be awarded a penalty by Busacca, who provided a further example of "home refereeing" just after the hour when he allowed Kagisho Dikgacoi to escape unpunished for an appalling tackle which felled Jorge Fucile.

Hosts beaten...Forlan scores Uruguay's opener

Eventually Busacca managed to get something right when Khune tripped Suarez after some nonsensical defending. Busacca dismissed Khune and Forlan put away the penalty after substitute keeper Moeneeb Josephs replaced the anonymous Pienaar.

Suarez also provided the beautifully judged cross from which Alvaro Pereira, who had otherwise had an awful game, bundled the ball over the line via his head and knee.

South Africa coach Carlos Alberto Parreira exorcised his disappointment at the scale of the defeat by laying the blame at the feet of Busacca, saying: "We are very upset with this referee. He did many things wrong... he is the worst referee in this competition so far and was very unfair from the start. I hope he will not get any more games. He should not be here."

Uruguay coach Oscar Tabarez did not see it that way and was sufficiently buoyed by victory to declare: "We are convinced we can win the World Cup. We can be a tough rival for any of the teams out there if we play well."

Keir Radnedge

Resolute...Uruguay keep out France's Andre-Pierre Gignac (in white)

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French farce...Abidal brings down Barrera and it's a penalty to Mexico

JUNE 17

FRANCE 0
MEXICO 2

Mayhem as French revolt over Anelka exit

FRANCE'S defeat was overshadowed by subsequent events when *Les Bleus*' squad went on strike ahead of a training session two days later in protest at the French federation's decision to send home Nicolas Anelka.

The storm had been sparked by Anelka's angry retort after coach Raymond Domenech criticised him at half-time during the Mexico game. Domenech responded by telling Anelka he would be substituted and the team subsided to two second-half goals before proceeding down the road to football suicide.

All emerged at the next full training session at the squad base in Knysna, Western Cape, after a heated row erupted in the centre of the pitch between captain Patrice Evra and fitness coach Robert Duverne. Domenech had to step in to separate them, after which Duverne angrily threw down his stopwatch and accreditation badge.

The players then left the pitch, boarded the team bus and held a meeting with Domenech behind closed curtains.

Team director Jean-Louis Valentin subsequently announced his resignation after revealing the squad did not want to train. In answer to inquiries about his decision, he said: "Ask the players. They do not want to involve themselves any more. It's unacceptable."

Valentin denied that he had been the source of a leak to the media about the half-time bust-up – a leak which Anelka had described as being propagated by "a traitor".

The players released a statement which, apart from opposing the decision to axe Anelka, complained that the federation "had at no time tried to protect the squad".

Other French media reports claimed that former captain and playmaker Zinedine Zidane had encouraged senior players – including Evra, Franck Ribery, Thierry Henry and William Gallas – to speak up against Domenech's initial tactical and team selection for the Mexico game.

The newspaper *Liberation* claimed the players told Domenech they wanted to play with a 4-4-2 formation instead of his favoured 4-2-3-1 and he should omit forward Sidney Govou and midfielder Yoann Gourcuff. It added that Domenech had accepted the idea until he discovered it came from Zidane. Then he reverted to his original plan with Anelka up front and Govou playing out wide.

As for the game, Mexico grabbed the glory with an all-round superior performance and second-half goals from substitutes Javier Hernandez and Cuauhtemoc Blanco.

Hernandez scored in the 64th minute after chasing a long downfield punt from skipper Rafa Marquez. This was his eighth goal in 14 internationals and meant he emulated his grandfather, Tomas Balcazar, who scored for Mexico in the 1954 World Cup finals. Hernandez's father also played in the 1986 finals but he failed to find the net.

Blanco slid the second home with a 79th-minute penalty after Eric Abidal had felled Pablo Barrera.

Keir Radnedge

JUNE 22

MEXICO 0
URUGUAY 1

No collusion as Suarez strikes

FEARS that this meeting of two Latin American nations would provide a repeat of the infamous game between West Germany and Austria in 1982 proved unfounded as both teams played their part in an entertaining game that saw Uruguay qualify for the next stage as group winners.

Twenty-eight years ago, Germany and Austria had conspired to produce a 1-0 scoreline to eliminate Algeria from their group while sending the two European sides through to the next round.

A draw in Rustenburg would have been sufficient for both Uruguay and Mexico to qualify, irrespective of the result between France and South Africa. But a potential second-round match-up with in-form Argentina for the runners-up provided Mexico with plenty of motivation to go for a win.

Uruguay also played their part in a lively first half. Once again, they were set up with an attacking outlook, with Diego Forlan behind front strikers Edinson Cavani and Luis Suarez.

It was the live wire Suarez who had Uruguay's first opportunity, flashing a shot across Mexico keeper Oscar Perez and past a post after seven minutes. Then Perez was tested by Forlan's cross, which he did well to palm away.

Mexico coach Javier Aguirre, as well as giving veteran Cuauhtemoc Blanco the captain's armband, also started Andres Guardado for the first time in the tournament. The Deportivo La Coruna player was lively on the left of midfield before being inexplicably withdrawn at half-time. He had Mexico's best chance of the first half, dispossessing Diego Perez and sending in a shot that flew off the underside of the bar and away.

Uruguay's pursuit of a goal always seemed more likely to bear fruit, however and, in the 43rd minute, Suarez gave them the lead, meeting Cavani's deep cross from the right with a firm header past Perez.

They continued to have the upper hand after the break. Diego Lugano's header from Forlan's whipped free-kick was pushed away by Perez, while Alvaro Pareira's delayed attempts to force home the rebound allowed frantic Mexican defending to block him.

With Uruguay happy to sit on their lead, Mexico went after an equaliser. Francisco Rodriguez twice headed wide from set-pieces and Guillermo Franco had a late chance but his touch deserted him in front of goal.

Gavin Hamilton

Fall guy...Jorge Fucile goes down under pressure from Mexico

JUNE 22

FRANCE 1
SOUTH AFRICA 2

Victory...but the dream is over

SOUTH AFRICA put on a brave face as their World Cup participation came to an end. They regained their spirit and pride, but victory over 10-man France was a pyrrhic success since Uruguay topped Group A and went through to the second round along with Mexico.

No host nation in the 80 years of the World Cup had failed to progress beyond the first round and this was not how *Bafana Bafana* wished to be remembered. Nor was it what FIFA had hoped for, considering the importance a successful host team brings to the event in terms of momentum.

South Africa survived a string of early

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I can't miss...Mphela puts South Africa 2-0 up against France

French incursions before taking a 20th-minute lead. Siphiwe Tshabalala swung over a right-wing corner, keeper Hugo Lloris – up until then about the only France player to emerge with any credit from the campaign – missed his punch and Bongani Khumalo stole in behind him to head home.

Further catastrophe overtook France five minutes later when midfielder Yoann Gourcuff was sent off by Colombian referee Oscar Ruiz for flattening MacBeth Sibaya with an elbow as both jumped for a cross in the hosts' penalty area.

In the 37th minute the French defence made a combined mess of three attempts to clear a left-wing cross and Katlego Mphela bundled the ball over the line.

The teams went in at half-time to learn that Uruguay held a 1-0 lead over Mexico, which meant that South Africa would qualify for the next round if they managed to score one more goal and Mexico were to concede one more.

Five minutes into the second half South Africa nearly managed it too, as Tshabalala sliced open the France defence with a perfect pass behind William Gallas and Mphela dashed in, only to see his shot clip the top of the bar. Then Mphela saw a powerful drive brilliantly tipped aside for a corner by the acrobatic Lloris.

In between France, with nothing more to lose and Florent Malouda already on the pitch, also threw the forgotten Thierry Henry into the fray in place of Djibril Cisse. The latter's last touch of the 2010 finals was to loop a shot on the turn over the bar. Henry also took over as captain, taking the armband from Alou Diarra and brought some much-needed cohesion to their attack.

South Africa still powered forward but in doing so with ever more desperation they forgot about defence. Franck Ribery, outstanding and almost playing the hosts on his own in midfield, crossed perfectly for Malouda to slide the ball into an open goal.

For South Africa, the dream was over.

Keir Radnedge

● France striker Nicolas Anelka announced his retirement from international football after being sent home from the World Cup. French FA president Jean-Pierre Escalettes also resigned.

MATCH DETAILS

JUNE 11 - JO'BURG (Soccer City)

SOUTH AFRICA 1 (Tshabalala 55)
MEXICO 1 (Marquez 79)
HT: 0-0. Att: 84,490. Ref: Irmatov (Uzb)

SOUTH AFRICA (4-4-1-1)
Khune - Gaxa, Mokoena, Khumalo, Thwala (Masilela 46) - Modise, Dikgacoi, Letsholonyane, Tshabalala - Pienaar (Parker 83) - Mphela.
Booked: Dikgacoi, Masilela.

MEXICO (4-3-3)
Perez - Aguilar (Guardado 55), Osorio, Rodriguez, Salcido - Juarez, Marquez, Torrado - Dos Santos, Franco (Hernandez 73), Vela (Blanco 69).
Booked: Juarez, Torrado.

JUNE 11 - CAPE TOWN

URUGUAY 0
FRANCE 0
Att: 64,100. Ref: Nishimura (Jap)

URUGUAY (3-4-1-2)
Muslera - Victorino, Lugano, Godin - M Pereira, Perez (Eguren 87), Arevalo, A Pereira - Gonzalez (Lodeiro 63) - Suarez (Abreu 74), Forlan.
Booked: Victorino, Lodeiro, Lugano.
Sent off: Lodeiro (81mins).

FRANCE (4-2-3-1)
Lloris - Sagna, Gallas, Abidal, Evra - Toulalan, Diaby - Govou (Gignac 85), Gourcuff (Malouda 75), Ribery - Anelka (Henry 72).
Booked: Evra, Ribery, Toulalan.

JUNE 16 - PRETORIA

SOUTH AFRICA 0
URUGUAY 3 (Forlan 24, pen 80, A Pereira 90)
HT: 1-0. Att: 42,658. Ref: Busacca (Swi)

SOUTH AFRICA (4-4-1-1)
Khune - Gaxa, Mokoena, Khumalo, Masilela - Modise, Dikgacoi, Letsholoyane (Moriri 57), Tshabalala - Pienaar (Josephs 79) - Mphela.
Booked: Pienaar, Dikgacoi.
Sent off: Khune (76mins).

URUGUAY (4-1-2-1-2)
Muslera - M Pereira, Lugano, Godin, Fucile (A Fernandez 71) - Perez (Gargano 90) - Arevola, A Pereira - Forlan - Cavani (S Fernandez 89), Suarez.
Booked: none.

JUNE 17 - POLOKWANE

FRANCE 0
MEXICO 2 (Hernandez 64, Blanco pen 79)
HT: 0-0. Att: 45,372. Ref: Al Ghamdi (Sau)

FRANCE (4-2-3-1)
Lloris - Sagna, Gallas, Abidal, Evra - Toulalan, Diaby - Gouvou (Valbuena 69), Ribery, Malouda - Anelka (Gignac 46).
Booked: Toulalan, Abidal.

MEXICO (4-3-3)
Perez - Osorio, Moreno, Rodriguez, Salcido - Juarez (Hernandez 55), Marquez, Torrado - Dos Santos, Franco (Blanco 62), Vela (Barrera 31).
Booked: Franco, Juarez, Moreno, Rodriguez.

JUNE 22 - RUSTENBURG

MEXICO 0
URUGUAY 1 (Suarez 43)
HT: 1-0. Att: 33,425. Ref: Kassai (Hun)

MEXICO (4-3-3)
Perez - Osorio, Rodriguez, Moreno (Castro 57), Salcido - Torrado, Marquez, Guardado (Barrera 46) - Dos Santos, Franco, Blanco (Hernandez 63).
Booked: Hernandez, Castro.

URUGUAY (4-3-3)
Muslera - M Pereira, Lugano, Victorino, Fucile - Arevalo, Perez, A Pereira (Scotti 77) - Suarez (A Fernandez 85), Forlan, Cavani.
Booked: Fucile.

JUNE 22 - BLOEMFONTEIN

FRANCE 1 (Malouda 70)
SOUTH AFRICA 2 (Khumalo 20, Mphela 37)
HT: 0-2. Att: 39,415. Ref: Ruiz (Col)

FRANCE (4-2-3-1)
Lloris - Sagna, Gallas, Squillaci, Clichy - Diarra (Govou 82), Diaby - Gignac (Malouda 46), Gourcuff, Ribery - Cisse (Henry 55).
Booked: Diaby.
Sent off: Gourcuff (25mins).

SOUTH AFRICA (4-4-2)
Josephs - Ngcongca (Gaxa 55), Mokoena, Khumalo, Masilela - Pienaar, Sibaya, Khuboni (Modise 78), Tshabalala - Mphela, Parker (Nomvethe 68).
Booked: none.

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WORLD CUP 2010 GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ARGENTINA	3	3	0	0	7	1	9
SOUTH KOREA	3	1	1	1	5	6	4
GREECE	3	1	0	2	2	5	3
NIGERIA	3	0	1	2	3	5	1

Suits you...Maradona celebrates Argentina's winner over Nigeria, while Messi mesmerises three Korean defenders

The Lionel and Diego show

Messi and Maradona star as attack-minded Argentina cruise through to the second round

DIEGO MARADONA'S Argentina, showing no signs of harm from their troubled qualifying campaign, gathered themselves and harnessed their attacking powers to romp through as Group B winners with three straight victories.

Any doubts that Maradona the coach might not get the best from Lionel Messi were dispelled in a bold 4-3-1-2 formation, with the world player of the year in a central position behind strikers Gonzalo Higuain and Carlos Tevez. Messi did everything but score, orchestrating Argentina's best moves as they defied convention by putting attacking invention ahead of defensive security.

The mood in the Argentinian camp appeared buoyant with Maradona – suited and booted, and looking every inch the modern manager on the touchline – celebrating every goal with gusto. "We've built a great group [of players] here and that's been reflected on the pitch," he said.

Argentina won their opening game against Nigeria by a solitary goal, though it would have been more but for keeper Vincent Enyeama's heroics. The goals did flow against South Korea as Messi gave one of the best performances of the group stages in a 4-1 victory.

With Argentina qualified for the last 16, Maradona – showing an appetite for man-management – gave a number of reserves a run-out in the final group game against Greece, with Messi handed the captain's armband for the first time. Argentina's 2-0 win, coupled with South Korea's 2-2 draw with Nigeria, sent the Koreans through as runners-up.

Nigeria's exit could only be laid at their own door. They threw away leads against both Greece and South Korea. Sani Kaita's foolish expulsion proved a turning point against the Greeks, while things could have been very different against South Korea but for Yakubu's howler of a miss. There was also discontent in the camp, with Peter Odemwingie left out against South Korea after criticising coach Lars Lagerback.

While Lagerback was reported to be considering a new four-year deal on reduced terms following the end of his short-term contract, Greece coach Otto Rehhagel resigned after nine years in charge, having overseen their greatest triumph at Euro 2004 and, with their win over Nigeria in South Africa, their first Word Cup finals victory.

Gavin Hamilton

> "I apologise to everyone. To the Nigerian people, the officials and to my team-mates"
>
> *Nigeria's Sani Kaita, who reportedly received more than 1,000 death threats after he was sent off against Greece*

Knockover...Cho Yong-hyung sends Theofanis Gekas flying

JUNE 12

SOUTH KOREA 2 GREECE 0

Stroll in the Park for Koreans

AIMING to qualify for the second phase for only the second time in eight attempts, the generally undersized South Koreans took a giant stride towards their objective with a stroll in the park against the most accommodating of opponents.

The crowd in the new Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium in Port Elizabeth – which for whatever reason was only two-thirds full – witnessed an Asian-Aegean duel that was nothing but a mismatch; the bright, animated and inventive South Koreans lording it over a one-paced and thoroughly impotent Greece.

Ironic then that it was the Greeks who carved out the first chance, inside two minutes, when left-back Vasilis Torosidis volleyed a Giorgos Karagounis corner just over the bar. However, totally lacking in pace, width and gumption, the Hellenics would rarely threaten again.

Alert and incisive from the off, the South Koreans took the lead on seven minutes, Ki Sung-yueng's free-kick from close to the left corner flag skimming over the Greece defence for centre-back Lee Jung-soo to coolly slot home.

With full-backs Cha Du-ri and Lee Young-pyo overlapping impressively, and captain Park Ji-sung and Kim Jung-woo calling the shots in midfield, the Taegeuk Warriors were making headway with every counter-attack and easily could have been 4-0 up at the break.

Highly-promising young winger Lee Chung-yong should have been awarded a penalty when fouled by Torosidis, Park Ji-sung was mysteriously pulled up by referee Michael Hester when bearing down on goal following a wonderful through ball from his

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skipper, and striker Park Chu-young ought to have done better than have his panicky finish deflected over by the left leg of goalkeeper Alexandros Tzorvas.

Seven minutes after the restart, the South Koreans were home and hosed. Loukas Vyntra looked to be in no danger at all when receiving a square ball 30 metres from his own goal, but a terrible first touch allowed Park Ji-sung to pick his pocket, stride forward and slide a precise shot past Tzorvas.

While the Greek body language bellowed surrender, the Asians merrily continued on their creative way but Park Chu-young wastefully headed a superb Cha Du-ri cross over from point-blank range.

A word-perfect Korean recital and two acts of fluffed lines from the Greek Theatre of Base Comedy.

Nick Bidwell

JUNE 12

ARGENTINA 1 NIGERIA 0

Maradona's set-piece goes to plan

ARGENTINA, a poor team during the qualifiers, were an unknown quantity going into their opening game at Ellis Park, but Diego Maradona's men showed their attacking intent.

They had Nigeria rocking early on and could have run up at least three goals in the opening 20 minutes but had to settle for Gabriel Heinze's sixth-minute header from Juan Sebastian Veron's corner.

It was a fine set-piece that worked to perfection. Maradona later in the tournament said that if he asked Argentina's tall players to get in among the defence in the six-yard box the area close to the penalty spot would be left relatively free.

That is where Veron placed his corner and where Heinze, making a late run, launched himself to power the ball into the top corner.

Lionel Messi had a brilliant game, roaming freely in the spaces behind striker Gonzalo Higuain and Carlos Tevez, and also rotating with the two in a moving triangle that had the Nigeria defence in confusion and greatly reduced their chances of launching counter-attacks.

Messi, who also linked well with Veron in the middle, converted Nigeria's goalkeeper Vincent Enyeama into the man of the match by forcing him into at least four good saves. Enyeama also denied Higuain twice.

Argentina showed vulnerability on the flanks – on the right where Jonas Gutierrez struggled with a dual role of acting right-back and moving the ball quickly forward in his more accustomed role at club level, and on the left, where the young Angel Di Maria, one of several members of Argentina's 2008 Olympic gold medal-winning side on the pitch, made a nervous, error-riddled World Cup debut.

Chinedu Obasi twice had good chances for Nigeria, his first after only two minutes, but they sorely missed John Obi Mikel in the middle of the park to organise their attacks.

Left-back Taye Taiwo, a team-mate of Heinze's at Marseille, was closest for Nigeria with 20 minutes to go, his shot skimming the outside of a post. Taiwo, hurt as he was tackled when shooting, was substituted five minutes later, just after Maxi Rodriguez had come on for Veron, who strained a calf muscle.

Rex Gowar

JUNE 17

ARGENTINA 4 SOUTH KOREA 1

Magical Messi runs the show

THROUGHOUT Argentina's troubled qualifying campaign, debate had raged as to the best role for Lionel Messi. Diego Maradona had been accused of playing him too deep and too wide, even out of position in order to protect his own reputation as Argentina's greatest-ever player.

But after their second group game, there could be no doubt Messi was being deployed in his most effective position, behind two main strikers.

Although the Barcelona star did not score himself, he had a role in all four Argentina goals as they dispatched South Korea with a wonderful display of attacking football.

An own goal started the rout, Messi's 17th-minute free-kick striking Park Chu-young on the shin and cannoning past stranded keeper Jung Sung-ryong. But Argentina needed no luck about the second when Messi prompted Maxi Rodriguez to cross to the far post, where Gonzalo Higuain steered home a header. Messi almost made it 3-0 but chipped just wide after a brilliant run.

Treble chance...Higuain celebrates his hat-trick

Winning dive...Heinze's spectacular header beats Nigeria

However, Argentina's emphasis on attack meant they did not have it all their own way and Korea pulled a goal back, Lee Chung-young cashing in on a lapse in concentration by Martin Demichelis in first-half injury time.

Carlos Tevez, an outstanding foil for Messi and Higuain in the first half, proved less effective in the second but his replacement by Sergio Aguero had the desired effect.

In the 76th minute Messi played a one-two with Aguero, tore into the area and saw his first shot blocked by the keeper. His follow-up struck the inside of a post but Higuain was on hand for a tap-in.

Then, with 10 minutes left, Messi's beautifully executed scooped pass put Aguero clear down the left and his cross was met with a clinical header from Higuain to complete his hat-trick.

Korea had their moments, notably when Park Ji-Sung split the Argentina defence with a perfect pass for Yeom Ki-Hun, who could only hit the side-netting.

But Korea were mostly bystanders as Argentina served notice to the rest of the tournament of their attacking ambition.

Maradona suddenly looked like a proper manager. And Argentina, with Messi imperious, looked serious contenders.

Gavin Hamilton

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Seeing red...Kaita (14) is given his marching orders against Greece

JUNE 17

GREECE 2 NIGERIA 1

Nigerians cursing "stupid" Kaita

NIGERIA will look back in amazement and wonder how they threw away a glorious opportunity to beat Greece in Bloemfontein.

Things had looked promising after Kalu Uche opened the scoring in the 16th minute, but the turning point proved to be midfielder Sani Kaita's sending-off 12 minutes from half-time.

That tipped the balance in favour of Greece, who went on to record their first-ever World Cup finals victory thanks to goals from Dimitrios Salpigidis and Vasilis Torosidis.

Uche's goal came directly from a free-kick. Greece goalkeeper Alexandros Tzorvas, diverted by Peter Odemwingie's run across his line of vision, allowed the shot from 35 yards to pass unchallenged into the net.

However, any chances Nigeria had of successfully defending their lead, or even extending it, were lost by the 33rd-minute departure of Kaita, who expressed his frustration at Torosidis holding on to the ball after it had run out of play by kicking out at his Greek opponent.

With Nigeria down to 10 men, Greece coach Otto Rehhagel sought to exploit the situation by adding an extra striker in Georgios Samaras and Greece began to enjoy the lion's share of possession.

For a while it looked as if Nigeria keeper Vincent Enyeama, who had done wonders against Argentina in Nigeria's opening game, would again come to the rescue. But in the 44th minute, Salpigidis took aim from 20 yards and saw his shot deflect off midfielder Lukman Haruna and into the net.

Although Greece sought to press home their advantage in the second half, Nigeria also had their moments. Tzorvas tipped over Uche's delicate cross then saved spectacularly from Yakubu, the rebound eluding substitute Chinedu Obasi.

Enyeama impressed again when denying Samaras' header from a corner, but he was at fault for Greece's winner when spilling Alexandros Tziolis' shot from distance into the path of Torosidis, who gleefully gobbled up the chance.

Enyeama denied Greece a third goal with an outstanding save from Giorgos Karagounis, but defeat left the Nigerians hoping final-round results went their way – and cursing Kaita for his stupidity.

John Holmesdale

JUNE 22

NIGERIA 2 SOUTH KOREA 2

Super Eagles downed after Yakubu howler

AN entertaining and dramatic match at the Moses Mabhida stadium will be remembered most for a miss from Yakubu that was described by Alan Shearer as "the worst I have ever seen".

Standing less than five yards out in the 65th minute, the Nigeria striker simply had to direct the ball into an unguarded net after AyilaYussuf's low cross from the left had beaten Korean goalkeeper Jung Sung-ryong at his near post.

Astonishingly, Yakubu put it wide – and though he smashed home an equaliser from the penalty spot three minutes later, the resulting draw left the Super Eagles agonisingly short of making the round of 16.

With Greece losing 2-0 to Argentina at the same time, the Nigeria players were aware victory would put them through, but Obafemi Martins also missed a late chance and the players were in tears at the end.

Yet they had started brightly enough when Kalu Uche put them ahead in the 12th minute. Chidi Odiah made a strong run down the right and Uche got to the cross ahead of his marker to sidefoot home from 12 yards.

Uche also struck the base of a post with a powerful low drive after cleverly turning his marker on the edge of the penalty area.

But South Korea equalised in the 38th minute. Full-back Lee Young-pyo was fouled on the left, and when Ki Sung-yueng curled his free-kick towards the far post, Lee Jung-soo stole in unmarked to divert the ball in with his shin from close range .

A second Korean goal early in the second half put themselves within touching distance of the knockout phase. Danny Shittu fouled Park Chu-young 25 yards from goal and the striker curled his free-kick perfectly around the wall and in at the far post.

The goal was all the more remarkable for being the first of the tournament to have come directly from a free-kick – and this in the 35th game, after more than 50 hours of football.

Then came Yakubu's howler, and though he brought Nigeria level with his 69th-minute penalty after Chinedu Obasi was tripped, Martins shot wide when through on goal and a point was enough for South Korea to progress to a last 16 tie against Uruguay.

Nigeria's players refused to blame Yakubu, however. "You would have put your house on him to score that," said midfielder Dickson Etuhu. "But everything that could have gone wrong went wrong. We had our chances but weren't good enough to finish them and it's over now."

Gerry Cox

We're back in it...Lee Jung-soo (no14) celebrates against Nigeria

JUNE 22

GREECE 0 ARGENTINA 2

Diego's reserves unlock safety-first Greece

TO the obvious delight of the ebullient Diego Maradona, Argentina sailed into the knockout phase with a third consecutive win. It took a long while to crystallise but eventually went to the only team on the pitch showing any sort of desire for the three points.

With Greece's chance of qualifying for the last 16 still intact – and Maradona opting to rest many of his key personnel, including Gonzalo Higuain, Carlos Tevez, Javier Mascherano, Walter Samuel and Gabriel Heinze – the men from Athens, Piraeus and

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Salonika might have been expected to show a modicum of ambition. Sadly, they could not or would not come out to play, invariably deploying 10 men behind the ball and detailing Sokratis Papastathopoulos to dog every step of the mercurial Lionel Messi.

Facing such a wall of negativity, Maradona's side were always going to find it hard to make space and opportunities, all the more so with a visibly irritated Messi shackled for long periods.

But the Argentinians are not ones to be easily deterred and would have been in front at half-time without the heroics of Greek goalkeeper Alexandros Tzorvas, who pulled off a hat-trick of fine saves to keep out efforts by Sergio Aguero, Juan Sebastian Veron and Maxi Rodriguez.

Greece boss Otto Rehhagel, that high priest of the defensive blockhaus, claimed after the game that he had no regrets about his team's elimination. He should. On the rare occasions the Greeks did try to push on, lone striker Georgios Samaras was playing well enough to cause serious discomfort to his markers – especially when making inroads into the box early in the second half and curling an effort just wide – and even a little more attacking enterprise from the Euro 2004 champions might have prompted an upset.

As it was, Greece stayed resolutely wedded to safety-first and finally had their lines breached after 77 minutes, Martin

At last...Demichelis puts Argentina ahead

Demichelis lashing home from close range after his header from a corner had struck team-mate Diego Milito.

This was the game-breaker in every sense as Greek heads bowed and all of a sudden Messi was in full flow, first smacking a drive against a post after a typically mazy run, then forcing Tzorvas to fumble a shot into the path of veteran substitute Martin Palermo, who coolly side-footed into the bottom right corner.

Cue more hugs and kisses on the Argentina bench. Maradona and company do love a goal celebration.

Nick Bidwell

MATCH DETAILS

JUNE 12 - PORT ELIZABETH

SOUTH KOREA 2 (Lee Jung-soo 7, Park Ji-sung 52)
GREECE 0
HT: 2-0: Att: 31,513. Ref: Hester (NZ)

SOUTH KOREA (4-4-2)
Jung Sung-ryong - Cha Du-ri, Cho Yong-hyung, Lee Jung-soo, Lee Young-pyo - Lee Chung-yong (Kim Jae-sung 90), Ki Sung-yueng (Kim Nam-il 74), Kim Jung-woo, Park Ji-sung - Park Chu-young (Lee Seung-yeoul 87), Yeom Ki-hun.
Booked: none.

GREECE (4-4-2)
Tzorvas - Seitaridis, Papadopoulos, Vyntra, Torosidis - Samaras (Salpigidis 59), Tziolis, Katsouranis, Karagounis (Patsatzoglou 46) - Charisteas (Kapetanos 61), Gekas.
Booked: Torosidis.

JUNE 12 - JO'BURG (Ellis Park)

ARGENTINA 1 (Heinze 6)
NIGERIA 0
HT: 1-0. Att: 50,389. Ref: Stark (Ger)

ARGENTINA (4-3-1-2)
Romero - Gutierrez, Demichelis, Samuel, Heinze - Veron (M Rodriguez 74), Mascherano, Di Maria (Burdisso 85) - Messi - Higuain (Milito 79), Tevez.
Booked: Gutierrez.

NIGERIA (4-3-3)
Enyeama - Odiah, Yobo, Shittu, Taiwo (Uche 74) - Kaita, Etuhu, Haruna - Obinna (Martins 52), Yakubu, Obasi (Odemwingie 60).
Booked: Haruna.

JUNE 17 - JO'BURG (Soccer City)

ARGENTINA 4 (Park Chu-young og 17, Higuain 33, 76, 80)
SOUTH KOREA 1 (Lee Chung-yong 45)
HT: 2-1. Att: 82,174. Ref: De Bleeckere (Blg)

ARGENTINA (4-3-1-2)
Romero - Gutierrez, Demichelis, Samuel (Burdisso 23), Heinze - M Rodriguez, Mascherano, Di Maria - Messi - Higuain (Bolatti 82), Tevez (Aguero 75).
Booked: Gutierrez, Mascherano, Heinze.

SOUTH KOREA (4-2-3-1)
Jung Sung-ryong - Oh Beom-seok, Lee Jung-soo, Cho Yong-hyung, Lee Young-pyo - Kim Jung-woo, Ki Sung-yueng (Kim Nam-il 46) - Lee Chung-yong, Park Ji-sung, Yeom Ki-hun - Park Chu-yong (Lee Dong-gook 81).
Booked: Yeom Ki-hun, Lee Chung-yong.

JUNE 17 - BLOEMFONTEIN

GREECE 2 (Salpigidis 44, Torosidis 71)
NIGERIA 1 (Uche 16)
HT: 1-1. Att: 31,593. Ref: Ruiz (Col)

GREECE (3-5-2)
Tzorvas - Papastathopoulous (Samaras 37), Kyrgiakos, Papadopoulos - Vyntra, Tziolis, Katsouranis, Karagounis, Torosidis - Salpigidis, Gekas (Ninis 79).
Booked: Papastathopoulous, Tziolis, Samaras.

NIGERIA (4-4-2)
Enyeama - Odiah, Yobo, Shittu, Taiwo (Echiejile 55, Afolabi 77) - Haruna, Etuhu, Kaita, Uche - Yakubu, Odemwingie (Obasi 46).
Booked: Obassi.
Sent off: Kaita 33mins.

JUNE 22 - DURBAN

NIGERIA 2 (Uche 12, Yakubu pen 69)
SOUTH KOREA 2 (Lee Jung-soo 38, Park Chu-young 49)
HT: 1-1. Att: 61,874. Ref: Benquerenca (Por)

NIGERIA (4-2-3-1)
Enyeama - Odiah, Yobo (Echiejile 46), Shittu, Afolabi - Ayila, Etuhu - Obasi, Kanu (Martins 57), Uche - Yakubu (Obinna 70).
Booked: Enyeama, Obasi, Ayila.

SOUTH KOREA (4-4-1-1)
Jung Sung-ryong - Cha Du-ri, Cho Yong-hyung, Lee Jung-soo, Lee Young-pyo - Lee Chung-yong, Ki Sung-yueng (Kim Jae-sung 87), Kim Jung-woo, Park Ji-sung - Yeom Ki-hun (Kim Nam-il 64) - Park Chu-young (Kim Dong-jin 90).
Booked: Kim Nam-il.

JUNE 22 - POLOKWANE

GREECE 0
ARGENTINA 2 (Demichelis 77, Palemo 89)
HT: 0-0. Att: 38,891. Ref: Irmatov (Uzb)

GREECE (3-4-2-1)
Tzorvas - Papadopoulas, Moras, Kyrgiakos - Vyntra, Papasthopoulos, Tziolis, Torosidis (Patsatzoglou 55) - Katsouranis (Ninis 54), Karagounis (Spiropoulos 46) - Samaras.
Booked: Katsouranis.

ARGENTINA (4-3-1-2)
Romero - Otamendi, Burdisso, Demichelis, C Rodriguez - M Rodriguez (Di Maria 63), Bolatti, Veron - Messi - Aguero (Pastore 77), Milito (Palermo 80).
Booked: Bolatti.

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	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
USA	3	1	2	0	4	3	5
ENGLAND	3	1	2	0	2	1	5
SLOVENIA	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
ALGERIA	3	0	1	2	0	2	1

Late show...Donovan (no10) scores against Algeria to give the USA top spot, relegate England to second and put out Slovenia

Comeback kids

Last-gasp Americans take top spot ahead of England

BILL CLINTON was just one of the American fans left totally enthralled by the last-minute drama that propelled the USA into the second round as winners of Group C. The former US president – the original "Comeback Kid" – watched alongside Sepp Blatter as Landon Donovan grabbed an injury-time winner against Algeria in their final game to secure top spot in the group.

The fighting spirit that the USA had shown in recovering from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 with Slovenia was in evidence again against Algeria and Donovan's goal sparked wild celebrations on the touchline in Pretoria. His last-gasp winner meant England had to accept second place – and even that had looked beyond them after a woeful display against Algeria left Fabio Capello's team needing to beat Slovenia to qualify.

Former Liverpool manager Graeme Souness had suggested that England's decision to base themselves at altitude may have sapped them of energy. Against Algeria they also seemed hamstrung by a fear of losing and were booed from the Cape Town pitch. Wayne Rooney, not yet match sharp following an ankle injury in the spring, was forced to apologise after he criticised the fans on live TV after the game.

England's former captain John Terry held a press conference ahead of the Slovenia game, but his call for Chelsea team-mate Joe Cole to be included in the starting line-up was ignored by Capello. Instead, he picked Jermain Defoe ahead of Emile Heskey and the diminutive striker scored the only goal of the game.

Donovan's late goal against Algeria prevented Slovenia from going through to the last 16, but the third-smallest nation ever to compete in the finals (after Northern Ireland and Trinidad & Tobago) departed with their reputation enhanced.

Algeria's campaign began badly, with goalkeeper Faouzi Chaouchi gifting Slovenia their goal in the opening game, and ended in controversy, with striker Rafik Saifi accused of hitting a female journalist after the defeat by the USA.

Gavin Hamilton

> "It looked to me as if the English have gone backwards to the bad old times of kick and rush"
>
> *Germany's former World Cup-winning coach and captain, Franz Beckenbauer*

Costly error...England keeper Green gifts the USA a point

JUNE 12

ENGLAND 1
USA 1

Goalkeeping error costs Capello's England

A MASSIVE blunder by England's Robert Green handed Clint Dempsey and the United States an equaliser in the Royal Bafokeng Stadium. The keeper's clanger punctured all those English pre-tournament expectations, but a draw was no more than the USA deserved for their efforts.

It had all begun so promisingly for England. With little more than four minutes gone, Glen Johnson took a throw-in from the right wing. Frank Lampard then moved the ball on to Emile Heskey, who judged his lay-off perfectly for skipper Steven Gerrard to dart through the heart of the USA defence and stab the ball past Tim Howard.

The goal was everything England coach Fabio Capello could have hoped for, but his side not only failed to capitalise on their lead they also let the US control much of the possession in the remainder of the first half.

The USA should have levelled as early as the 20th minute. An angled cross from Landon Donovan out on the right eluded the England defence only for Jozy Altidore to glance his header wide of Green's right-hand post.

Oguchi Onyewu, whose fitness had been in doubt earlier in the week, then outjumped England again to meet another free kick from Donovan, but he glanced his header just wide.

The spirit with which the Americans fought back after their early setback was impressive and had Capello prowling his technical area in a fury.

England's James Milner was booked for a second trip on Steve Cherundolo and he was substituted by Shaun Wright-Phillips on the half hour, while USA keeper Howard

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underwent prolonged treatment following a collision with Heskey.

Next to nothing was seen of Wayne Rooney in the England attack. Instead, Donovan and Dempsey were the pick of the attackers on view, and the Fulham man gained his reward in the 40th minute. He outwitted Gerrard and let fly with a left-foot shot which slipped out of Green's hands and over the goal line for the equaliser. Green's selection ahead of David James and Joe Hart had been in doubt up until just two hours before kick-off when Capello named his team.

There were further problems for England when Ledley King had to be substituted at half-time by Jamie Carragher, leaving the side badly short of pace at the heart of the defence.

England created few clear openings in the first half of a game which did not open up until the closing stages.

Johnson put an angled shot into the side net, before Altidore raced clear of the lumbering Carragher at the other end – only to see his drive pushed against the near post by Green.

Rooney finally began to find space, first by throwing himself in vain for a diving header and then inches wide with a speculative shot on the turn, before setting up Ashley Cole for an effort which Howard saved at the expense of a corner.

Everything about expectation was expressed in the players' demeanour at the final whistle: England slipped away as fast as possible while the Americans ran over to celebrate in front of their cheering fans.

The draw suited both teams, but the USA were far happier with the manner in which it was achieved.

Keir Radnedge

JUNE 13

ALGERIA 0
SLOVENIA 1

Ten-man Algeria hand Slovenia historic win

ALGERIA goalkeeper Faouzi Chaouchi will be forever haunted by the sight of Slovenia midfielder Robert Koren lining up to shoot from the edge of the penalty area.

Chaouchi's mistake in allowing a tame-looking shot from Koren to squeeze through his arms and into the net proved to be the decisive moment in a match that was dominated by the cautious defensive outlooks of both teams.

Koren's 79th-minute strike gave Slovenia their first-ever World Cup finals victory, which they gained against an Algerian side who lost substitute Abdelkader Ghezzal to a red card midway through the second half.

With both teams packing the midfield, few chances were created in open play.

Algeria twice went close from set-pieces in the first-half. After just three minutes, left-back Nadir Belhadj sent in a dipping free-kick which goalkeeper Samir Handanovic had to punch over his bar. Then, in the 34th minute, Rafik Halliche rose highest at a corner only to head wide.

The best opportunity of the half fell to Slovenia's Valter Birsa, but Chaouchi tipped his fierce shot over.

Algeria were reduced to 10 men in the 73rd minute when Ghezzal, who had only been on the pitch for a few minutes and had already been booked, handled the ball.

However, Slovenia did not seem well placed to take advantage of Ghezzal's dismissal and it was only when Koren launched a speculative shot at goal, which Chaouchi let bounce onto his chest and into the net, that they could contemplate three points from their opening match.

John Holmesdale

JUNE 18

SLOVENIA 2
USA 2

States spring second-half revival

THE United States fought back in dramatic style to snatch a point from Slovenia after being two goals down at the interval – and ended up furious at not taking all three points.

Slovenia pushed closer to the second round for the first time in their history after first-half goals from the outstanding Valter Birsa and Zlatan Ljubijankic. The Americans, having created next to nothing in the way of first-half openings, despite enjoying more of the ball, were caught twice on classic counter-attacks.

USA coach Bob Bradley made one lone but decisive change at half-time, bringing on the experienced and versatile Benny Feilhaber in place of nervy striker Robbie Findley, who had not only looked out of his depth but had also collected a yellow card and looked like a red waiting to happen.

● Michael Bradley, the son of USA coach Bob Bradley, became the first player to score in a World Cup finals when playing for a team coached by his father.

Unstoppable...Donovan (no10) scores against Slovenia

Bradley gained almost instant reward when, five minutes after the restart, Landon Donovan cruised in on the right, shaped to cross, then thumped an inch-perfect shot up into the top corner of the net. Donovan also started the move which led to Michael Bradley's deserved and dramatic equaliser in the 82nd minute.

However, the American players ended the game angry rather than relieved after Mali referee Koman Coulibaly disallowed controversially what appeared to be a potential winning goal four minutes later by substitute Maurice Edu.

Skipper Donovan said afterwards: "The referee wouldn't tell us what the call was for. It was his first World Cup match and maybe he got caught up in the occasion.

"We asked him in a non-confrontational manner and he wouldn't explain it. He just ignored us. I didn't see any foul. I saw a normal free-kick and a goal."

Reviewing the spirited recovery from two goals down at the interval, Donovan added: "At half-time we basically said that anyone who doesn't believe we could do it shouldn't go back out. Now we've got one more chance, against Algeria, and we have to take it."

Keir Radnedge

Under pressure...Slovenia keeper Samir Handanovic against Algeria

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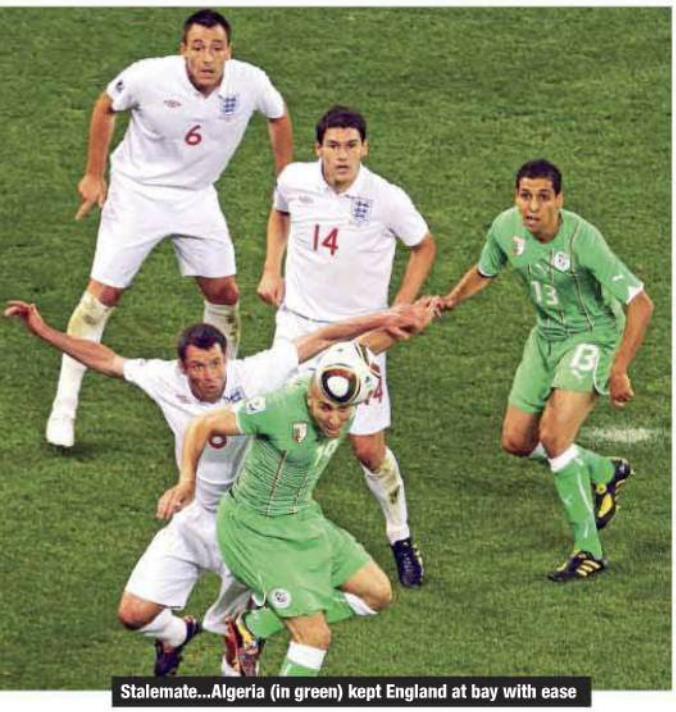
Stalemate...Algeria (in green) kept England at bay with ease

JUNE 18

ENGLAND 0
ALGERIA 0

England draw again as Algeria earn first point

ENGLAND manager Fabio Capello, on his 64th birthday, was at pains to explain why his side were held to a goalless stalemate by Algeria at Green Point stadium.

"This was not the England side that I knew," the Italian complained. "Rooney did not play like Rooney."

In fact, it was a struggle to remember a worse World Cup performance by England. They had been expected to beat Algeria comfortably but failed to find any rhythm or accurate passing in midfield, nor any cutting edge or movement in attack.

England's big players – Wayne Rooney, Steven Gerrard and Frank Lampard – went missing on a night that presented few goalscoring opportunities.

Algeria, with a lone striker in Karim Matmour, swamped the midfield and England, who included Gareth Barry after he recovered from an ankle injury, struggled to assert themselves in the crowded conditions.

Instead it was Algeria who settled more quickly, with England looking nervous and uncomfortable at the back, despite David James replacing Robert Green in goal after his error in the opening game.

England's best chance of the first half fell to Lampard, but when Aaron Lennon's cleared cross fell to him 12 yards out he could not get enough power in his shot.

Karim Ziani fizzed a shot past James's near post from outside the area, but that was the closest Algeria came in a poor half.

England continued to disappoint after the break. Algeria's rugged defending did not help matters but England should have been able to create more. Yet when their play demanded a creative influence, Capello sent on forwards Jermain Defoe and Peter Crouch and kept Joe Cole on the bench.

Shaun Wright-Phillips' arrival stretched the play a little and one run produced a cross that was deflected over the Algerian crossbar. That was the closest England came to scoring.

Boos, not vuvuzelas, greeted Lampard's weak shot from distance as the game whimpered out into a goalless stalemate.

"I was expecting better from England," said Algeria coach Rabah Saadane. "We played extremely effectively."

For Capello and England, it was back to the drawing board.

Gavin Hamilton

JUNE 23

SLOVENIA 0
ENGLAND 1

Coach Capello's changes ensure qualification

ENGLAND progressed to the second round with a much improved performance, thanks to a goal created and scored by players drafted in for the match by manager Fabio Capello.

James Milner whipped in a cross from the right that Jermain Defoe volleyed into the net from close range in the 23rd minute. It was vindication for Capello's decision to drop Aaron Lennon and Emile Heskey following the tame draw against Algeria.

In truth, England should have won by a more convincing margin – and, as it turned out, one more goal would have seen them top the group – but they spurned several inviting opportunities as Steven Gerrard shot weakly just after Defoe's goal, and Wayne Rooney's scuffed shot from close range struck a post.

These misses meant some unnecessary moments of alarm in the final few minutes when Slovenia went after the equaliser that would have sent them through to the knock-out stages. Only an excellent block by John Terry kept out Zlatko Dedic, while a saving tackle from Matthew Upson prevented a goal for Milijove Novakovic.

At the final whistle the England players met in an emotional huddle on the pitch and were joined by Capello. It was a clear public response to stories of discontent in the squad and splits at the training camp. Before the game, John Terry had apologised to Capello for a press conference that was too forceful and had advocated the selection of Chelsea club-mate Joe Cole.

In the end, Joe Cole played only as a sub for the subdued Rooney, who sustained a slight ankle injury. Rooney was never at his best and nor were England, despite some promising passages of play. But there was still plenty of woeful passing and a glaring inability to keep possession.

Nevertheless, Capello professed himself delighted by the game, saying: "This is what I wanted to see, the spirit, and to see them fight together. We'll now go forward. Their minds are free and they can play without fear."

Gerrard added: "We've done it before when our backs have been against the wall. But we need to do it all the time. We need to find consistency in the knockout stages."

Matjaz Kek, the Slovenia coach, was philosophical about an occasion that overwhelmed his players, saying: "It's indescribable. Of course we are disappointed, but I hope our sport can gain from this defeat. I hope in time my players can focus on what they have achieved."

Jim Holden

Fear Defoe...the England striker (no19) hits the winner against Slovenia

JUNE 23

USA 1
ALGERIA 0

Last-gasp goal seals top spot for USA

"WE'RE alive, baby!" exclaimed Landon Donovan to American television in the immediate aftermath of his late goal against Algeria that took the USA from the brink of elimination and into the second round as winners of Group C.

The USA had squandered a number of opportunities in an entertaining and lively

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game and looked to be heading out before Donovan struck in injury time.

An open game had seen its first chance after 12 seconds, when Karim Ziani's volley from outside the penalty box flew just wide of Tim Howard's goal.

Rafik Djebbour then hit the crossbar for Algeria, while Clint Dempsey thought he had scored for the USA in the 21st minute after he directed Herculez Gomez's shot past Algeria goalkeeper Rais M'Bolhi, only for his effort to be ruled offside.

As the Americans pushed forward, Dempsey, who was released by Donovan, saw his attempt claimed by M'Bolhi, who also saved well from Donovan before Jozy Altidore slugged the rebound wide.

The USA went even closer in the second half. After a strong run by Altidore, Dempsey steered a curling shot towards goal, but it rebounded from a post and he could only send a second shot wide.

Further chances came and went, and as the 90th minute approached the USA were in third place and seemingly heading home.

Winner...Donovan

With seconds remaining, Donovan launched one last attack. Altidore crossed the ball into the six-yard box, where M'Bolhi could only beat it away. Donovan was first to the loose ball and knocked it into an empty net for a late, deserved winner.

There was still time for Algeria's frustration to pour over in the final second when captain Antar Yahia was sent off for a second yellow card.

"These guys put a lot into it," USA coach Bob Bradley said. "They never quit. We were pushing hard for a goal. It made for a wide open game, but we needed a win."

John Holmesdale

MATCH DETAILS

JUNE 12 - RUSTENBURG

ENGLAND 1 (Gerrard 4)
USA 1 (Dempsey 40)
HT: 1-1. Att: 44,026. Ref: Simon (Bra)

ENGLAND (4-4-2)
Green - Johnson, King (Carragher 46), Terry, A Cole - Lennon, Lampard, Gerrard, Milner (Wright-Phillips 31) - Rooney, Heskey (Crouch 79).
Booked: Milner, Carragher, Gerrard.

USA (4-4-2)
Howard - Cherundolo, DeMerit, Onyewu, Bocanegra - Donovan, Bradley, Clark, Dempsey - Findley (Buddle 77), Altidore (Holden 86).
Booked: Cherundolo, DeMerit, Findley.

JUNE 13 - POLOKWANE

ALGERIA 0
SLOVENIA 1 (Koren 79)
HT: 0-0. Att: 30,325. Ref: Batres (Gtm)

ALGERIA (3-5-2)
Chaouchi - Bougherra, Halliche, Yahia - Kadir (Guedioura 82), Lacen, Yebda, Matmour (Saifi 81), Belhadj - Djebbour (Ghezzal 58), Ziani.
Booked: Ghezzal, Yebda.
Sent off: Ghezzal 73mins.

SLOVENIA (4-4-1-1)
S Handanovic - Brecko, Suler, Cesar, Jokic - Kirm, Koren, Radosavljevic (Komac 87), Birsa (Pecnik 84) - Dedic (Ljubijankic 53) - Novakovic.
Booked: Radosavljevic, Komac.

JUNE 18 - JO'BURG (Ellis Park)

SLOVENIA 2 (Birsa 13, Ljubijankic 42)
USA 2 (Donovan 48, Bradley 82)
HT: 2-0. Att: 45,573. Ref: Coulibaly (Mli)

SLOVENIA (4-4-2)
S Handanovic - Brecko, Suler, Cesar, Jokic - Birsa (Dedic 87), Koren, Radosavljevic, Kirm - Ljubijankic (Pecnik 74, Komac 90), Novakovic.
Booked: Cesar, Suler, Kirm, Jokic.

USA (4-4-2)
Howard - Cherundolo, Onyewu (Gomez 80), DeMerit, Bocanegra - Donovan, Bradley, Torres (Edu 46), Dempsey - Findley (Feilhaber 46), Altidore.
Booked: Findley.

JUNE 18 - CAPE TOWN

ENGLAND 0
ALGERIA 0
Att: 64,100. Ref: Irmatov (Uzb)

ENGLAND (4-4-2)
James - Johnson, Carragher, Terry, A Cole - Lennon (Wright-Phillips 63), Barry (Crouch 84), Lampard, Gerrard - Rooney, Heskey (Defoe 74).
Booked: Carragher.

ALGERIA (5-4-1)
M'Bolhi - Kadir, Bougherra, Halliche, Yahia, Belhadj - Boudebouz (Abdoun 74), Yebda (Mesbah 88), Lacen, Ziani (Guedioura 81) - Matmour.
Booked: Lacen.

JUNE 23 - PORT ELIZABETH

SLOVENIA 0
ENGLAND 1 (Defoe 23)
HT: 0-1. Att: 36,983. Ref: Stark (Ger)

SLOVENIA (4-4-2)
S Handanovic - Brecko, Suler, Cesar, Jokic - Birsa, Koren, Radosavljevic, Kirm (Matavz 79) - Ljubijankic (Dedic 62), Novakovic.
Booked: Jokic, Birsa, Dedic.

ENGLAND (4-4-2)
James - Johnson, Terry, Upson, A Cole - Milner, Lampard, Barry, Gerrard - Rooney (J Cole 72), Defoe (Heskey 86).
Booked: Johnson.

JUNE 23 - PRETORIA

USA 1 (Donovan 90)
ALGERIA 0
HT: 0-0. Att: 35,827. Ref: Bleeckere (Blg)

USA (4-4-2)
Howard - Cherundolo, DeMerit, Bocanegra, Bornstein (Beasley 81) - Donovan, Bradley, Edu (Buddle 64), Dempsey - Gomez (Feilhaber 46), Altidore.
Booked: Altidore, Beasley.

ALGERIA (3-4-2-1)
M'Bolhi - Bougherra, Halliche, Yahia - Kadir, Yebda, Lacen, Belhadj - Ziani (Guedioura 69), Matmour (Saifi 86) - Djebbour (Ghezzal 65).
Booked: Yebda, Yahia, Lacen.
Sent off: Yahia 90mins.

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	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
GERMANY	3	2	0	1	5	1	6
GHANA	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
AUSTRALIA	3	1	1	1	3	6	4
SERBIA	3	1	0	2	2	3	3

No way through...Ghana crowd out Germany's Thomas Muller (no13)

To the wire

Germany and Ghana squeeze through as Serbia lose out

GROUP D ALWAYS promised to be the tightest of the first-round draws – and so it proved, with all four teams going into the final round of matches with hopes of reaching the knockout stages.

Germany, despite losing their second game to Serbia, qualified as group winners, while Ghana, who lost their final game to Germany, carried African hopes into the last 16 as group runners-up, ahead of Australia on goal difference.

Even in the last seconds of the final round of matches, it was still unclear who would go through, with Australia frantically holding out against Serbia for a 2-1 victory, amid claims from Serbia coach Radomir Antic that his side were denied a penalty in the final seconds of the game.

"We didn't get fair treatment," said Antic. "We deserved much more. We had a goal disallowed for offside when it wasn't, and then we didn't get a penalty when we should have done."

Germany's build-up to the tournament had been blighted by injuries to key players, notably captain Michael Ballack, but they brushed those troubles aside with a convincing opening victory over Australia. But optimism was tempered by defeat to Serbia, which left Germany having to beat Ghana to be sure of progression.

Ghana's off-pitch preparations had not been completely trouble-free. Sulley Muntari was forced to issue a statement denying he was unhappy at being left out of the starting line-up. "Whatever is going on in the media circles is untrue and I have the utmost respect for my team-mates, coach, administrators and the entire team personnel," he said.

On the pitch, a mistake from keeper Richard Kingson in their second game, against Australia, turned a favourable situation into a potentially difficult one. But Australia's unexpected victory over Serbia helped Ghana through to the second round.

Australian's post-mortem centred on the future of senior players such as Harry Kewell and Brett Emerton, and whether to fast-track youngsters such as Brett Holman.

"After the Germany game, we were hurting," said Emerton. "But we've put in two good performances, against Ghana with 10 men and then winning against Serbia. At least we can walk away with our heads held high."

Gavin Hamilton

> "Who knows what this setback might do for us. It's better to lose now than in the knockout stages"
>
> *Defender Arne Friedrich after Germany's surprise defeat by Serbia*

JUNE 13

SERBIA 0
GHANA 1

Black Stars chalk up Africa's first win

GHANA became the African continent's first winners at these finals by defeating Serbia with a late penalty from Asamoah Gyan.

Serbia sought a decisive start with Marko Pantelic going for goal in the opening seconds, but it was the Black Stars who went closer in the first half when skipper John Mensah headed narrowly wide from a free-kick.

The Africans grew increasingly dangerous the longer the game went on. Andre Ayew headed wastefully wide in front of goal, then another headed effort, this time from Gyan, ricocheted out off keeper Vladimir Stojkovic's left-hand post.

Determined...Ghana's John Paintsil (no4)

Serbia were reduced to 10 men in the 74th minute when Aleksandar Lukovic was sent off by Argentinian referee Hector Baldassi for a second yellow card, yet they then produced their most dangerous football of the match. Milos Krasic had a close-range drive brilliantly saved by keeper Richard Kingson, Nemanja Vidic headed over from the corner, and Branislav Ivanovic's long-range strike just missed.

Ghana regained their discipline, decisively, in the last 10 minutes of the game. Serb substitute Zdravko Kuzmanovic punched away a left-wing cross and the outstanding Gyan put away the 85th-minute penalty. He might even have scored again in stoppage time but was denied by a post.

The deserving winners – magnificently and nosily supported by their fans in the

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Loftus Versveld heartland of South African Springbok rugby – would not have been flattered by a wider margin of victory.

Keir Radnedge

JUNE 13

GERMANY 4 AUSTRALIA 0

Gritty Socceroos are no match for young Germans

NO matter that Germany have their youngest World Cup team since 1934, with an average age of 25.4 years. Or that five of the current starting line-up are major tournament rookies. World Cups invariably bring out the best in the *Nationalmannschaft* and that time-honoured phenomenon could once again be observed in this lop-sided affair in Durban, a match illuminated by the mercurial genius of Germany's attacking midfielder Mesut Ozil.

The sixth consecutive time they have won their opening World Cup game, Germany's fluid attacking play had Australia running for cover from first to last, and even if the Green and Gold's best finisher, Tim Cahill, had not been unjustly sent off early in the second half, the rout would still have been on.

Like all sporting representatives from Down Under, the Socceroos were game and gritty, but they had too many journeymen and ageing legs to combat the freshness and verve of their free-wheeling opponents.

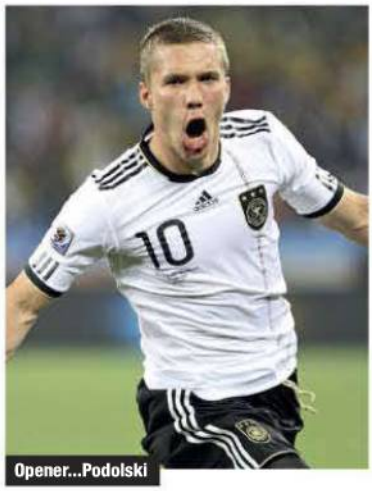
Only in the initial exchanges did the Aussies look capable of holding their own and they nearly took a shock lead when the German rearguard shambolically failed to deal with a Luke Wilkshire corner. Always a threat in the air, Cahill's header struck team-mate Lucas Neill, and Richard Garcia's lumbering attempt to force home the rebound was blocked by Germany skipper Philipp Lahm.

That Antipodean near-miss turned out to be Germany's wake-up call. Just five minutes later, Ozil released Thomas Muller on the right and he intelligently cut the ball back for Lukas Podolski to drive home.

Both the increasingly influential Ozil and striker Miroslav Klose would subsequently spurn excellent opportunities to put their team out of sight. However, Germany's incisive movement and slick passing was always going to reap more dividends and their second goal duly arrived midway through the half, Lahm whipping in a great cross from the right flank and Klose getting ahead of flailing Aussie keeper Mark Schwarzer to head in.

Any slim hopes Australia had of finding a way back into the game would disappear for good with Cahill's harsh dismissal on 56 minutes. While his clumsy challenge on Bastian Schweinsteiger certainly warranted a yellow card, the red flourished by Mexican referee Marco Rodriguez was the equivalent of a firing squad for shoplifting.

With the three points clearly in the bag,



Opener...Podolski

Germany could now afford to take their foot off the gas, though they could not completely suppress their taste for the jugular and added further goals from Muller and substitute Cacau, whose tap-in was set up by the irresistible Ozil.

Following a 3-0 victory over Australia at the 1974 World Cup, the West Germany side were famously booed by their own crowd in Hamburg. Thirty-six years on, a not-too dissimilar scoreline will have gone down much better with *Deutschland* fans.

Nick Bidwell

JUNE 18

GERMANY 0 SERBIA 1

Ten-man Germany pay the penalty

SPANISH referee Alberto Undiano would be well-advised to avoid any future trips to Berlin, Hamburg or Munich.

Until he sent off *Nationalmannschaft* striker Miroslav Klose for two questionable cautions eight minutes before half-time, Germany had looked in total control of the contest – only for their numerical disadvantage, a missed Lukas Podolski penalty and some dogged Serb resistance to result in the Germans' first defeat in the opening phase of a World Cup since losing to Denmark back in 1986.

For the opening third of the game only one winner looked possible as Serbia's methodical and painfully slow approach work contrasted with Germany's far more pro-active and incisive recipe for success – a tremendously effective high-pressing game, a queue of midfield runners and injections of pace in and around the opposition box.

But all was to change with Klose's dismissal for a pair of borderline offences: the first, an apparently accidental tap on the heels of Branislav Ivanovic; the second, a misjudged tackle which sent Dejan Stankovic sprawling. Klose undoubtedly was unfortunate, though he should have been more careful.

From the kick-off, Undiano was fussiness personified and, despite a lack of bone-jarring challenges, he still felt compelled to issue nine yellow cards in all.

To make matters worse for the now-understaffed Germany, they conceded almost immediately afterwards. While young left-back Holger Badstuber took a nap, Milos Krasic burst free on the right and crossed high and deep to the far-post, where giant front-man Nikola Zigic easily outjumped both Philipp Lahm and Per Mertesacker to head the ball down for the unmarked Milan Jovanovic to force home.

With Serbia opting to sit back in defence and hit on the break, Germany continued to dominate proceedings and had their chances, particularly when midfielder Sami Khedira lashed a shot against the bar at the end of the first half and Nemanja Vidic inexplicably batted away a cross with his arm to concede a penalty on the hour mark.

Podolski, so impressive in the demolition of Australia, produced only a tame, imprecise effort which keeper Vladimir Stojkovic saved to his left. Not since Uli Hoeness missed against Poland in 1974 had a Germany player failed from the spot in normal time at the World Cup.

As they threw more and more players forward in search of the equaliser, Germany inevitably became more vulnerable to Serbia's neatly orchestrated counters and the men from the Balkans might have wrapped up the win well before the final whistle, Jovanovic's smart shot hitting the post and Zigic shaving the crossbar with a header.

Frustrated and emotional, Germany coach Joachim Low furiously threw a water bottle late in the game. Who could blame him?

Nick Bidwell

Shock...Jovanovic (in red) scores Serbia's winner

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Seeing red...Kewell gets his marching orders

JUNE 19

GHANA 1 AUSTRALIA 1

Kewell off as Socceroos see red again

DEVASTATED by the 4-0 loss at the hands of Germany and with Tim Cahill suspended, Australia knew they needed to beat Ghana to get themselves back on track.

Coach Pim Verbeek, vilified in Australia for the tactical changes he made to his line-up for the loss to the Germans, reverted to something akin to the formation his team had utilised throughout the previous two years.

Harry Kewell returned to the team having recovered sufficiently from injury to make his first appearance in South Africa and the Socceroos were boosted further when Brett Holman gave them the lead after 11 minutes.

Holman reacted quickest when Richard Kingson spilled Marco Bresciano's free-kick and stroked the ball home from close range. It was the start that the Australians so desperately wanted.

However, the misfortune that had blighted their clash with Germany struck again in the 24th minute when Jonathan Mensah's shot struck Kewell on the arm and referee Roberto Rosetti not only pointed to the spot but showed Kewell a straight red card.

Down to 10 men again and with Asamoah Gyan having converted from the spot, the Australians were forced into another rearguard action.

Showing all their battling qualities, the Socceroos not only kept Ghana at bay they came close to taking all three points only for Luke Wilkshire to be denied by Kingson 18 minutes from time.

"It was a tough game again but I think it was a fantastic performance from my players," said Verbeek. "We played 70 minutes with only 10 players. We had to work very hard. We knew we had to win this game at least to keep everything in our hands and we did everything to win it.

"We were very unlucky with Kewell's sending-off. It was definitely not a red card and a mistake by the referee. When I saw it on the television, the referee could never, ever have seen what was happening.

"I've seen some other handballs from the last week – especially from Serbia – that were not a red card. But the players reacted very well to that and did a great job and now we have to do another great job in four days' time against Serbia."

Michael Church

JUNE 23

GHANA 0 GERMANY 1

Ozil strikes but Ghana keep flag flying

AFRICAN football had good cause to celebrate one of its leading lights being beaten by a European superpower. Ghana may have lost to Germany at Soccer City but results elsewhere ensured the Black Stars became the only African team to reach the last 16.

Germany, as group winners, were able to put the disappointment of losing to Serbia in their second match behind them with some excellent movement from the attacking midfield trio of Mesut Ozil, Lukas Podolski and Thomas Muller.

Ghana were well-organised by coach Milovan Rajevac with a good blend of youth and experience. But they afforded Ozil too much space in the hole between their defence and midfield, and paid the price with Ozil's well-taken goal in the 60th minute.

A draw might not have been enough for Germany to progress so victory left coach Joachim Low relieved that his young side had been able to handle the pressure.

"You could see our young team struggling to cope with the pressure at times," said Low. "But these are the games you have to win. We've done it, and I'm delighted."

Low had stuck with the same formation that had lost to Serbia, with Cacau the only change as a replacement for the suspended Miroslav Klose. But with Cacau not as mobile as Klose, and Ghana's full-backs reluctant to push forward, Germany had to rely on Ozil, Podolski and Muller passing their way through from central midfield.

Ozil had Germany's best chance of the first half when he ran on to Cacau's flick and found himself one on one with Ghana keeper Richard Kingson, who needed a combination of foot and hand to keep the ball out.

In the second half, Germany's most dangerous player proved more decisive when he found himself in space on the edge of the area. Collecting a pass from Muller, Ozil flicked the ball into the air, allowed it to bounce then cracked a volley past Kingson.

Jerome Boateng departed in the 73rd minute, replaced by Marcell Jansen, having set an international first as he and his brother, Ghana's Kevin-Prince Boateng, became the first siblings to appear on opposite sides at the World Cup finals.

Only a footnote in football history, perhaps, but Ghana's progress to the second round and Germany's recovery could have a lasting impact on the tournament.

Gavin Hamilton

Prince Brothers Germany's Jerome (left) confronts Kevin-Prince (no 23)

JUNE 23

AUSTRALIA 2 SERBIA 1

Wasteful Serbia out in a huff

THOUGHTS of what might have been were a prominent theme in both camps after Australia roared back in the second-half to edge out Serbia in a match in Nelspruit which long bordered on the turgid but burst into dramatic life in the closing stages.

Despite recording their first win of the tournament and restoring some much-needed pride, Australia missed out on a place in the second round on goal difference, while a resentful, infuriated Serbia headed for the exit too, protesting as they went that Uruguayan referee Jorge Larrionda had seriously boobed in not awarding them a last-gasp penalty when the ball seemed to strike Tim Cahill's hand as he jumped for a corner.

A Serb equaliser would have put them through at the expense of Ghana. But in truth it was more a case of ball to arm and would have been a soft award.

As unpalatable as it might be to coach Radomir Antic and his squad, Serbia lost for

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one simple reason: their failure to convert chances, especially when making all the running in the first-half.

The turbo-charged Milos Krasic should have done much better than hurriedly firing wide after being put clean through by Milos Ninkovic; a close-range Branislav Ivanovic volley was kept out by Mark Schwarzer's incredible reflex stop; and Nikola Zigic proved comprehensively that height does not equate to aerial ability, making a complete hash of a free header from just a few feet out.

Unfortunately for the Serbs, an ability to finish off sides does not form part of their

No holds barred...Serbia's Nemanja Vidic gets to grips with Cahill (no4)

DNA and after the restart were made to pay by a far more energetic and purposeful Australia, who finally realised that their opponents were vulnerable to a direct and high-tempo assault.

Socceroos midfielders Jason Culina and Marco Bresciano set the tone for their side's new-found offensive intent with decent shots from distance and they claimed first blood after 69 minutes with that master of the clouds, Tim Cahill, leaping above his markers to glance in a long cross. Talk about a sea change – and soon the Oz surf really would be up thanks to substitute Brett Holman, who surged forward from deep and struck a fierce low drive past Vladimir Stojkovic.

Their hopes of a last-16 spot seemingly going up in smoke, Serbia were not about to give up the ghost though. With the clock ticking down, Schwarzer fumbled a Zoran Tosic shot for Marko Pantelic to pull a goal back and there was still time for the same player to have the ball in the net again, only to be thwarted by a raised offside flag.

On the night – one winner, two losers.

Nick Bidwell

MATCH DETAILS

JUNE 13 - PRETORIA

SERBIA 0
GHANA 1 (Gyan pen 85)
HT: 0-0. Att: 38,833. Ref: Baldassi (Arg)

SERBIA (4-4-2)
Stojkovic - Ivanovic, Lukovic, Vidic, Kolarov - Krasic, Milijas (Kuzmanovic 62), Stankovic, Jovanovic (Subotic 76) - Pantelic, Zigic (Lazovic 69).
Booked: Zigic, Lukovic, Lukovic, Kuzmanovic.
Sent off: Lukovic (74mins).

GHANA (4-1-4-1)
Kingson - Paintsil, Vorsah, John Mensah, Sarpei - Annan - Tagoe, Asamoah (Appiah 73), Boateng (Addy 90) A Ayew - Gyan (Owusu-Abeyie 90).
Booked: Vorsah, Tagoe.

JUNE 13 - DURBAN

GERMANY 4 (Podolski 8, Klose 26, Muller 68, Cacau 70)
AUSTRALIA 0
HT: 2-0. Att: 62,660. Ref: Rodriguez (Mex)

GERMANY (4-2-3-1)
Neuer - Friedrich, Mertesacker, Badstuber, Lahm - Khedira, Schweinsteiger - Muller, Ozil (Gomez 74), Podolski (Marin 81) - Klose (Cacau 68).
Booked: Ozil, Cacau.

AUSTRALIA (4-2-3-1)
Schwarzer - Wilkshire, Neill, Moore, Chipperfield - Grella (Holman 46), Valeri - Emerton (Jedinak 74), Culina, Garcia (Rukavytsya 64) - Cahill.
Booked: Moore, Neill, Valeri.
Sent off: Cahill (56 mins).

JUNE 18 - PORT ELIZABETH

GERMANY 0
SERBIA 1 (Jovanovic 38)
HT: 1-0. Att: 38,294. Ref: Undiano (Spa)

GERMANY (4-2-3-1)
Neuer - Friedrich, Mertesacker, Badstuber (Gomez 77), Lahm - Khedira, Schweinsteiger - Muller (Marin 70), Ozil (Cacau 70), Podolski - Klose.
Booked: Klose, Khedira, Lahm, Schweinsteiger.
Sent off: Klose 37mins.

SERBIA (4-4-2)
Stojkovic - Ivanovic, Subotic, Vidic, Kolarov - Krasic, Ninkovic (Kacar 70), Stankovic, Jovanovic (Lazovic 79) - Kuzmanovic (Petrovic 75), Zigic.
Booked: Ivanovic, Kolarov, Subotic, Vidic.

JUNE 19 - RUSTENBURG

GHANA 1 (Gyan pen 25)
AUSTRALIA 1 (Holman 11)
HT: 1-1. Att: 34,812. Ref: Rosetti (Ita)

GHANA (4-4-2)
Kingson - Paintsil, Jonathan Mensah, Addy, Sarpei - Tagoe (Owusu-Abeyie 87), Annan, Asamoah (Muntari 77), Boateng (Amoah 87) - A Ayew, Gyan.
Booked: Addy, Jonathan Mensah, Annan.

AUSTRALIA (4-4-2)
Schwarzer - Wilkshire (Rukavytsya 85), Neill, Moore, Carney - Emerton, Culina, Bresciano (Chipperfield 66), Valeri - Holman (Kennedy 68), Kewell.
Booked: Moore.
Sent off: Kewell (24mins).

JUNE 23 - JO'BURG (Soccer City)

GHANA 0
GERMANY 1 (Ozil 60)
HT: 0-0. Att: 83,391. Ref: Simon (Bra)

GHANA (4-2-3-1)
Kingson - Paintsil, Jonathan Mensah, John Mensah, Sarpei - Annan, Boateng - Tagoe (Muntari 64), Asamoah, A Ayew (Adiyiah 90) - Gyan (Amoah 82).
Booked: A Ayew.

GERMANY (4-2-3-1)
Neuer - Lahm, Mertesacker, Friedrich, Boateng (Jansen 73) - Khedira, Schweinsteiger (Kroos 81) - Muller (Trochowski 67), Ozil, Podolski - Cacau.
Booked: Muller.

JUNE 23 - NELSPRUIT

AUSTRALIA 2 (Cahill 69, Holman 73)
SERBIA 1 (Pantelic 84)
HT: 0-0. Att: 37,836. Ref: Larrionda (Uru)

AUSTRALIA (4-2-3-1)
Schwarzer - Wilkshire (Garcia 82), Beauchamp, Neill, Carney - Culina, Valeri (Holman 65) - Emerton, Cahill, Bresciano (Chipperfield 66) - Kennedy.
Booked: Beauchamp, Wilkshire, Emerton.

SERBIA (3-5-2)
Stojkovic - Vidic, Lukovic, Obradovic - Ivanovic, Kuzmanovic (Lazovic 77), Stankovic, Ninkovic, Jovanovic - Krasic (Tosic 62), Zigic (Pantelic 67).
Booked: Lukovic, Ninkovic.

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	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
HOLLAND	3	3	0	0	5	1	9
JAPAN	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
DENMARK	3	1	0	2	3	6	3
CAMEROON	3	0	0	3	2	5	0

Bicycle races…Holland's Dirk Kuyt tries the spectacular but his effort is blocked by Japan's Tulio Tanaka (no4)

Holland cruise through

Functional Dutch concentrate on results as Japan take second spot

HOLLAND'S TOURNAMENT history is littered with examples of how they began well only to be undone by events on and off the pitch. Mindful of such a scenario repeating itself, coach Bert Van Marwijk negotiated a cautious approach through the group stage.

Without injured winger Arjen Robben – who was sidelined until the final match against Cameroon, when he appeared as a substitute – the Dutch were functional rather than fun to watch, concentrating on the result rather than winning with any flair.

Victories over Denmark and Japan ensured Holland's qualification for the knockout stage, leaving the others to scrap for second place. Surprisingly, it was not the European know-how of Denmark or the enthusiasm of Cameroon, heavily backed by the South African crowds, who came through as group runners-up. Instead it was Japan, whose Europe-based players – especially Keisuke Honda – stepped up to the plate with some exceptional free-kicks, notably against Denmark.

Cameroon's failure to progress to the next stage, after they threw away a lead and a promising position against Denmark in their second game, was particularly disappointing for African football. One of the continent's leading players, Samuel Eto'o, bowed out by renewing his war of words with former great Roger Milla.

Eto'o had threatened to walk out on the eve of the tournament in protest at comments from Milla, who repeated his criticism on Cameroon's exit. "Eto'o may have a great reputation but he didn't do anything for the team during this World Cup," Milla said as the pair jostled for public recognition as Cameroon's leading football personality.

Eto'o, as the scorer of both Cameroon goals, finished as Africa's joint-top scorer in the group stage. Rather, it was a case of Eto'o being let down by his team-mates, as well as coach Paul Le Guen, who made some questionable selection decisions before the opening defeat by Japan.

Denmark were a disappointment, losing to Japan after a swashbuckling recovery against Cameroon. The fitness of striker Nicklas Bendtner proved to be a concern throughout, though defender Simon Kjaer, suspended against Japan, was an emerging star.

Gavin Hamilton

> "We're playing like Germany and the Germans are playing like us"
>
> *Holland midfielder Rafael van der Vaart*

JUNE 14

HOLLAND 2 DENMARK 0

Own goal eases Dutch nerves

MAYBE it was not achieved with the grace of a Johan Cruyff or the ruthless stiletto of a Marco Van Basten, but Holland's opening win over Denmark set them up and running in ominous style.

Coach Bert Van Marwijk summed up the tension of the match perfectly in saying later: "I'd been thinking about this first match for a long time; it was the most important because a good start is so important and it was always going to be a tough match. We were the favourites so we knew we would face a defensive opponent and we could not afford to make mistakes.

"We wanted to play beautiful football but in the first half we gave away the ball too much. However, the second half was excellent. The players were relieved – and so was I."

Nicklas Bendtner, playing through necessity despite carrying an injury, and Dennis Rommedahl wasted Denmark's clearest openings in the first half. But, after Simon Poulsen inadvertently conceded a luckless own goal at the start of the second half, the Danish attack vanished.

Dutch keeper Maarten Stekelenburg was a spectator for most of the remainder of the game as official man of the match Wesley Sneijder – still apparently playing well within himself – and his team-mates took command.

Dirk Kuyt scored a simple second goal in the 85th minute but Robin Van Persie

My ball…Sneijder (no10) is thwarted by Thomas Kahlenberg

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and Mark Van Bommel might have created a more embarrassing scoreline for the Danes. No dynamite this time, merely a damp squib.

Keir Radnedge

JUNE 14

JAPAN 1 CAMEROON 0

Morale boost for Okada's men

JAPAN came into the World Cup in almost total disarray after head coach Takeshi Okada had offered to stand down in the aftermath of a friendly defeat by South Korea just days before their departure and morale was at an all-time low.

What better way, then, to give the team – and the nation – a much-needed boost than to pick up their first victory at a World Cup on foreign soil by beating an equally disparate Cameroon.

Hold on...Japan's Yuto Nagatomo (no5) gets to grips with Eric Choupo-Moting

Okada made several surprise choices in his starting line-up, with Daisuke Matsui earning a berth in midfield alongside Yuki Abe, while CKSA Moscow midfielder Keisuke Honda was pushed forward to become the fulcrum of the team's attacking moves.

Internal conflict between coach Paul Le Guen and midfielder Alexandre Song saw the Arsenal man on the bench but, despite having no recognised striker on the pitch, the Japanese picked up the win as Honda capitalised on some poor defending by the Cameroon back line following Matsui's 39th minute free-kick, poking the ball home from close range.

The goal was the only bright point of a drab first half in a contest featuring two teams struggling for cohesion and quality.

As time ran out, Cameroon picked up the tempo as they pushed for an equaliser, but it was too little, too late from a side that lacked the attacking threat a team featuring the talents of Samuel Eto'o should possess.

"I told the players they couldn't just be defensive and they had to alternate between attacking spells and defensive ones," said Okada.

"In the first half, we had a few difficult moments, but we put lots of pressure on them and were able to score. After that, they attacked us, but our defence did a good job.

"I think we'll need to be more aggressive in the future, though. This match is only our preparation for the second one and we still need to improve.

"I don't think it was a great success – what's important is the next game."

Okada may not have seen the win as pivotal, but it guaranteed his country would stay alive in the competition no matter what happened in their second game against Holland. There was to be no such luxury, however, for Cameroon.

Michael Church

JUNE 19

HOLLAND 1 JAPAN 0

Sneijder rocket but Dutch win ugly

WESLEY SNEIJDER scored the only goal to leave Holland top of the group, but it was not a totally convincing performance from the inventors of total football.

The Dutch found it hard to break down a determined Japan, and also failed to get to grips with the flight of the ball as their normally immaculate players found themselves overhitting passes, crosses and shots.

Sneijder's goal was an exception, with the Internazionale midfielder thumping the ball with real power from outside the penalty area in the 53rd minute. But even then it was straight at Japanese goalkeeper Eiji Kawashima, who failed to read the flight of the ball and allowed it to go in off his gloves.

Up to that stage, clear goalscoring chances had been few and far between.

For the Dutch, Sneijder thumped a free-kick over the crossbar and Dirk Kuyt had a spectacular attempt at an overhead kick blocked by Tulio Tanaka, who then headed wide of the Holland goal after being given too much space by their defence.

It was not until the 38th minute that one of the keepers was called into action, when Daisuke Matsui hit a volley straight at Maarten Stekelenburg in the Dutch goal.

Keisuke Honda then thumped a free-kick high over the bar before Rafael Van der Vaart's long range volley was saved easily by Kawashima close to half-time.

Orange crush...Nigel De Jong makes his presence felt

Robin Van Persie missed a sitter at the start of the second half, the striker scuffing his shot horribly wide after Mark Van Bommel's perfect through ball put him in on goal. But the Arsenal striker made amends by setting up Sneijder for the decisive goal soon afterwards, laying the ball back for the Inter playmaker to break the deadlock after Tulio Tanaka failed to clear Rafael Van der Vaart's cross.

The tempo and urgency increased as Japan chased an equaliser. Yoshito Okubo had a shot saved after a mazy run and substitute Shinji Okazaki volleyed high and wide in the closing minutes.

By then they could have been 3-0 down after Dutch substitute Ibrahim Affellay twice had clear runs on goal, but both times Kawashima saved at his feet.

Dutch coach Bert Van Marwijk admitted his side were frustrated by the hard-working Japanese. "They were excellently organised and very confident," he said. "We knew it would be tough.

"If we play beautiful football and win that is fine, but as I told the team when I became coach two years ago, we have to be prepared to win ugly games too."

Gerry Cox

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No way through...Emana struggles to break down the Denmark defence

JUNE 19

CAMEROON 1
DENMARK 2

It's over and out for Le Guen

PAUL LE GUEN insisted he had no intention of quitting after Cameroon became the first nation forced to book their flight home following defeat by Denmark – but within a week he had changed his mind and become the finals' first managerial casualty.

The Frenchman, appointed midway through the qualifying campaign, turned around results in remarkable fashion to lead them to the finals. However, defeats by Japan and the Danes, in a match they could easily have won with cooler heads in front of goal, left them without hope of progress even though they still had to play Holland.

Le Guen, at odds with senior players over his selections, remained defiant. He said: "I have only one regret: that we didn't play better in our first game against Japan. I'm just very unhappy and sad for the Cameroon nation. Looking back at how things were when I took over the team we did get to the finals, which was an achievement.

"I have tried to build a team which mixes younger and senior players, and find harmony between them. I thought I was doing my best."

Denmark's Morten Olsen was not a happy man either, even though he emerged with a victory and second-round qualification to play for next time out against Japan.

He said: "We showed a lot of spirit but there were things we did today we don't ever want to do again. We had a number of chances but football is also about errors. Cameroon benefited once and perhaps they could have scored a couple more goals.

"We were heroic in defence but we had problems elsewhere. We gave the ball away too much and struggled to get it back and we must improve on that aspect if we want to go forward in this World Cup."

● For the first time, Denmark – having made it to their fourth World Cup finals – failed to reach the second phase.

Cameroon had been offered early hope of only a second African victory at these "home" finals after 10 minutes when Denmark keeper Thomas Sorensen pushed a short ball out to centre back Christian Poulsen, whose over-casual pass to the right was intercepted by Achille Emana.

Skipper Samuel Eto'o easily scored from Emana's short cross – thus ending the Internazionale striker's long wait for his second goal in the finals, eight years after his first back in 2002 in Japan and Korea.

But, in a game marked by shabby defending on both sides, it was hardly surprising when Denmark levelled in the 33rd minute. Dennis Rommedahl escaped down the right, caught up with a long crossfield pass from Simon Kjaer and squared to the far post where Nicklas Bendtner slid in to score.

More goals could have followed at both ends before the interval. Denmark's fit-again Jon Dahl Tomasson had one effort cleared in front of the line by Sebastien Bassong before, at the other end, Eto'o hit a post and Emana, running clear, shot against the onrushing Sorensen and saw the ball ricochet back against him but out for a goal kick.

Cameroon wasted a wholesale string of chances throughout a chaotic second half and were thus undone just after the hour when Rommedahl, who thrives on the big international stage, escaped down the right then cut back inside substitute Jean Makoun to score with a curling left-foot drive.

Keir Radnedge

JUNE 24

DENMARK 1
JAPAN 3

Lively Japan reach a milestone

JAPAN went into their final group game knowing a draw would be enough to take them through to the knockout stages for the first time on foreign soil.

In the event, they exceeded their wildest dreams with a performance of quality that sent disappointing Denmark home with their tails between their legs.

Two free-kicks of the highest calibre gave Japan a 2-0 lead at half-time, the first coming from Keisuke Honda, who somehow found a way to tame the Jabulani ball as he unleashed a powerful, dipping shot beyond Thomas Sorensen from more than 30 yards.

Asian player of the year Yasuhito Endo doubled Japan's advantage from much closer in, the Gamba Osaka midfielder curling the ball around the wall and giving Sorensen no chance.

Having settled the quickest, the Japanese were well worth their lead – Daisuke Matsui and Makoto Hasebe both went close in the opening 15 minutes – as they put in a performance that was assured and confident, both in defence and in attack.

The Japanese retained control into the second half and it was not until nine minutes from time that Denmark finally found a way past Eiji Kawashima, who parried Jon Dahl Tomasson's penalty only for the forward to slip the rebound over the line.

Denmark pushed forward looking for the equaliser but left space at the back for Japan to exploit and, with three minutes left, Honda broke away to set up Shinji Okazaki for the simplest of finishes.

"The players were unafraid and cool, yet fierce at the same time," said coach Takeshi Okada. "They were fantastic. All the players and staff are capable of uniting and working together toward a single goal. But our journey doesn't end here. I want them to enjoy it for today, but tomorrow we start again in preparing for the Paraguay game."

Going through...Japan make history

Michael Church

JUNE 24

CAMEROON 1
HOLLAND 2

Huntelaar douses pride of Lions

WHAT had promised to be one of the most exciting games of the group stages actually turned out to be a dead rubber. Holland had already qualified as group winners, while Cameroon had been at the forefront of the African failure at this World Cup. The Indomitable Lions were playing for pride, not points.

But any fears that the match would lack edge were dispelled by Holland's unchanged starting line-up. Arjen Robben remained on the bench as coach Bert Van Marwijk resisted the temptation to give his reserves a run-out.

Cameroon coach Paul Le Guen re-jigged

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his midfield completely, giving World Cup debuts to Aurelien Chedjou, midfielder Landry N'Guemo and defender Gaetan Bong alongside Jean Makoun. Strikers Achille Emana and Pierre Webo were also dropped, with Eric Choupo-Moting returning to the starting line-up.

In contrast, the Dutch attacking quartet of Robin Van Persie ahead of the interchanging Dirk Kuyt, Wesley Sneijder and Rafael Van der Vaart were starting their third consecutive game. Their movement always looked capable of troubling the Cameroon backline.

Holland made the breakthrough with a well-executed goal after 36 minutes. Van Persie drifted to the right of the area and played a ball back to Van der Vaart. Kuyt dummied over the latter's cross and it ran to Van Persie, who shot through Souleymanou Hamidou's legs.

The Dutch continued to play disciplined, functional football after half-time. Van Persie was a willing lone front man until his replacement by Klaas-Jan Huntelaar, but with Kuyt and Sneijder reluctant to commit too far forward, long balls from the back were too often Holland's main line of attack.

Cameroon dragged themselves back into the game in the 65th minute when Khalid Boulahrouz brought down Makoun 20 yards out. Geremi curled the free-kick towards goal but Van der Vaart led the charge to block the ball with his hand. Eto'o dispatched the resulting spot-kick for his second goal of the tournament.

Robben made his first appearance of the finals when he replaced Van der Vaart for the final 22 minutes and played a crucial role in Holland's winner. Cutting in from the right, he curled a sweet shot on to the bar and Huntelaar turned in the rebound.

Gavin Hamilton

● Cameroon's Rigobert Song became the first African player to appear in four World Cup finals when he came on as a sub against Holland.

Flying Dutchman...Huntelaar is sent crashing by Cameroon's Stephane Mbia

MATCH DETAILS

JUNE 14 - JO'BURG (Soccer City)

HOLLAND 2 (Agger og 46, Kuyt 85)
DENMARK 0
HT: 0-0. Att: 83,465. Ref: Lannoy (Fra)

HOLLAND (4-2-3-1)
Stekelenburg - Van der Wiel, Mathijsen, Heitinga, Van Bronckhorst - De Jong (De Zeeuw 88), Van Bommel - Kuyt, Sneijder, Van der Vaart (Elia 67) - Van Persie (Afellay 77).
Booked: De Jong, Van Persie.

DENMARK (4-4-1-1)
Sorensen - Jacobsen, Kjaer, Agger, S Poulsen - Jorgensen, C Poulsen, Kahlenberg (Eriksen 73), Enevoldsen (Gronkjaer 56) - Rommedahl - Bendtner (Beckmann 62).
Booked: Kjaer.

JUNE 14 - BLOEMFONTEIN

JAPAN 1 (Honda 39)
CAMEROON 0
HT: 1-0. Att: 31,600. Ref: Benquerenca (Por)

JAPAN (4-5-1)
Kawashima - Nagatomo, Nakazawa, Tulio Tanaka, Komano - Matsui (Okazaki 69), Honda, Abe, Hasebe (Inamoto 88), Endo - Okubo (Yano 82).
Booked: Abe.

CAMEROON (4-3-3)
Hamidou - Mbia, N'Koulou, Bassong, Assou-Ekotto - Matip (Emana 63), Makoun (Geremi 75), Enoh - Eto'o, Webo, Chuopo-Moting (Idrissou 75).
Booked: N'Koulou.

JUNE 19 - DURBAN

HOLLAND 1 (Sneijder 53)
JAPAN 0
HT: 1-0. Att: 62,010. Ref: Baldassi (Arg)

HOLLAND (4-2-3-1)
Stekelenburg - Van der Wiel, Heitinga, Mathijsen, Van Bronckhorst - Van Bommel, De Jong - Kuyt, Sneijder (Afellay 83), Van der Vaart (Elia 72) - Van Persie (Huntelaar 88).
Booked: Van der Wiel.

JAPAN (4-4-2)
Kawashima - Nagatomo, Nakazawa, Tulio Tanaka, Komano - Hasebe (Tamada 77), Matsui (S Nakamura 64), Abe, Endo - Okubo (Okazaki 77), Honda.
Booked: none.

JUNE 19 - PRETORIA

CAMEROON 1 (Eto'o 10)
DENMARK 2 (Bendtner 33, Rommedahl 61)
HT: 1-1. Att: 38,704. Ref: Larrionda (Uru)

CAMEROON (4-4-2)
Hamidou - Mbia, N'Koulou, Bassong (Idrissou 72), Assou-Ekotto - A Song, Geremi, Enoh (Makoun 46), Emana - Webo (Aboubakar 78), Eto'o.
Booked: Bassong, Mbia.

DENMARK (4-3-3)
Sorensen - Jacobsen, Kjaer, Agger, S Poulsen - Gronkjaer (Kahlenberg 67), C Poulsen, Jorgensen (Jensen 46) - Rommedahl, Bendtner, Tomasson (J Poulsen 86).
Booked: Sorensen, Kjaer.

JUNE 24 - RUSTENBURG

DENMARK 1 (Tomasson 81)
JAPAN 3 (Honda 17, Endo 30, Okazaki 87)
HT: 0-2. Att: 27,967. Ref: Damon (SAf)

DENMARK (4-2-3-1)
Sorensen - Jacobsen, Agger, Kroldrup (Larsen 56), S Poulsen - C Poulsen, Jorgensen (J Poulsen 34) - Rommedahl, Tomasson, Kahlenberg (Eriksen 63) - Bendtner.
Booked: Kroldrup, C Poulsen, Bendtner.

JAPAN (4-3-3)
Kawashima - Nagatomo, Nakazawa, Tulio Tanaka, Komano - Matsui (Okazaki 74), Abe, Endo (Inamoto 90) - Hasebe, Honda, Okubo (Konno 88).
Booked: Endo, Nagatomo.

JUNE 24 - CAPE TOWN

CAMEROON 1 (Eto'o pen 65)
HOLLAND 2 (Van Persie 36, Huntelaar 83)
HT: 0-1. Att: 63,093. Ref: Pozo (Chl)

CAMEROON (4-4-2)
Hamidou - Geremi, Mbia, N'Koulou (R Song 73), Assou-Ekotto - N'Guemo, Chedjou, Makoun, Bong (Aboubakar 56) - Eto'o, Choupo-Moting (Idrissou 72).
Booked: N'Koulou, Mbia.

HOLLAND (4-2-3-1)
Stekelenburg - Boulahrouz, Heitinga, Mathijsen, Van Bronckhorst - Van Bommel, De Jong - Kuyt (Elia 66), Sneijder, Van der Vaart (Robben 73) - Van Persie (Huntelaar 59).
Booked: Kuyt, Van der Vaart, Van Bronckhorst.

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WORLD CUP 2010 GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
PARAGUAY	3	1	2	0	3	1	5
SLOVAKIA	3	1	1	1	4	5	4
NEW ZEALAND	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
ITALY	3	0	2	1	4	5	2

Wake-up call…skipper Cannavaro exhorts his team-mates in vain during Italy's crucial defeat by Slovakia

Arrivederci Azzurri

Tired and emotional defending champions crash out

NEVER BEFORE have the two finalists from the previous World Cup both exited the competition in the opening round. But Italy's shock defeat by Slovakia in their final group game meant the defending champions joined 2006 runners-up France in taking an early flight home.

Italy coach Marcello Lippi took full responsibility, saying: "There are no excuses because when a team comes to a match as important as tonight's with terror in their legs, their heads and their hearts, and don't express themselves, it means the coach hasn't prepared them in the right way."

Lippi left Fabio Grosso, scorer of the decisive penalty in the Berlin Final four years ago, out of his final 23-man squad. But he still picked nine players aged 30 or older, including 36-year-old Fabio Cannavaro, who remained captain and first-choice in central defence, despite doubts over his form following a disappointing season with Juventus.

Italy were without injured playmaker Andrea Pirlo until the final half-hour against Slovakia and their lack of attacking initiative was to prove their undoing. An opening draw with Paraguay, highlighting Italy's goalscoring shortcomings, was followed by a surprise stalemate with New Zealand, which left the *Azzurri* needing to beat Slovakia.

Defeat marked the end of an era for Cannavaro and midfielder Gennaro Gattuso, who joined their coach in announcing their international retirement.

Slovakia, poor in a 2-0 defeat by Paraguay in their second game, bounced back in their final game to shock Italy. Vladimir Weiss' young side, led by Marek Hamsik, produced an energised performance which proved too much for ageing Italy legs.

Paraguay, meanwhile, topped the group despite showing little sparkle. But a battling midfield combined well with some variation in attack to secure an easy passage.

New Zealand, 2,000-1 outsiders at the start of the tournament, departed with an unbeaten record and justification for coach Ricki Herbert's safety-first approach.

Gavin Hamilton

> "When a team comes to a match with terror in their legs, heads and hearts it means the coach hasn't prepared them in the right way"
>
> *Marcello Lippi takes the blame for Italy's demise*

Head first…Alcaraz (21) gives Paraguay the lead

JUNE 14

ITALY 1
PARAGUAY 1

Draw can't hide Italian concerns

ITALY coach Marcello Lippi said he was "very satisfied with our performance" after the world champions opened the defence of their title in rain-soaked Cape Town by drawing with Paraguay.

Yet Lippi would surely have been concerned by his team's lack of finishing power and an inability to impose themselves on physically demanding opponents.

With recent international recruit Lucas Barrios in the starting line-up alongside Nelson Haedo Valdez, Paraguay looked capable of causing Italy problems. And a shocking tackle by Cristian Riveros on Riccardo Montolivo within the opening minute went unpunished and gave notice of Paraguayan intentions.

Even without the injured Andrea Pirlo, Italy were able to dominate possession in the first half, though they managed to fashion few genuine chances amid the treacherous conditions.

It was against the run of play that Paraguay took the lead in the 39th minute. From a Riveros free-kick, Antolin Alcaraz rose between Fabio Cannavaro and Daniele De Rossi to head past Gianluigi Buffon.

It soon emerged that Buffon was not fully fit. Lippi revealed his keeper had suffered a muscular problem in the warm-up though he had soldiered through the first half.

Substitute keeper Federico Marchetti replaced Buffon for the second half, when Paraguay's safety-first approach invited Italy to attack. Yet all too often Italy's forwards were found wanting and the equaliser only arrived in the 63rd minute thanks to a mistake

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by Paraguay goalkeeper Justo Villar.

De Rossi's inswinging corner was spilled by Villar and the ball landed at the feet of Simone Pepe, who stabbed home from close range.

But Italy were unable to press home any advantage. Vincenzo Iaquinta was isolated in the lone striker role and received insufficient support from Pepe and Claudio Marchisio.

Montolivo almost snatched a winner with a late long-range effort that was tipped away for a corner, but ultimately Italy were dependant on a goalkeeping error to escape with a point.

"Italy are here," Lippi claimed. "We are strong both physically and mentally and we have shown that against a team who made some big statements, but ultimately came here to defend."

Gavin Hamilton

JUNE 14

NEW ZEALAND 1 SLOVAKIA 1

Kiwis grab dramatic equaliser

NEW ZEALAND arrived in South Africa with limited ambitions, but their World Cup campaign took on a new dimension after Winston Reid grabbed an injury-time equaliser to secure a late and unlikely draw against Slovakia in Rustenburg.

"Playing at a World Cup was a dream come true, but this is even better," said All Whites coach Ricki Herbert.

"You would have to say this is our best-ever result. We've never picked up a point in a World Cup before. We've thrown some really good punches today and I thought it was an extremely well-deserved result."

Herbert had a good reason to be happy. Slovakia had dominated the match for most of the 92 minutes, taking a deserved lad through Robert Koren early in the second half and looking good for a victory until Reid's injury-time intervention.

New Zealand had begun in confident fashion. Long balls to their forward three caused Slovakia some initial difficulties, especially when Chris Killen had a free header in the fifth minute.

But Slovakia slowly began to get to grips with the game and the coach's son, Vladimir Weiss, started to trouble the New Zealand defence with his runs.

Nevertheless, the first half ended with little goalmouth action having been recorded. Slovakia started the second half more positively and got their reward in the 50th minute when Robert Vittek rose and met Stanislav Sestak's cross with a header that flew into the bottom corner of the net.

New Zealand went in search of an equaliser but struggled to break through a well-organised Slovakian backline that provided a solid base for Vittek and Sestak to attack on the break.

Shane Smeltz missed an excellent chance to equalise in the 75th minute when he headed wide. It looked as if Slovakia would claim the points but there was still time for Reid to score and earn New Zealand their first ever points at a World Cup.

John Holmesdale

Lean on me...Chris Killen (left) tussles with Marek Cech of Slovakia

JUNE 20

SLOVAKIA 0 PARAGUAY 2

Midfield sees Paraguay through

PARAGUAY lined up with three strikers – Roque Santa Cruz, Nelson Haedo Valdez and Lucas Barrios – but it was their midfield who scored the goals that brought a comfortable victory in Bloemfontein.

Paraguay's strength, evident during the lengthy qualifying campaign, was on display once again in a one-sided contest settled by goals from Enrique Vera and Cristian Riveros.

It was a good job that Paraguay's midfielders had an eye for goal as their forwards missed a number of chances in the first half. Santa Cruz saw his deflected shot saved by Slovakia keeper Jan Mucha, while Riveros shot straight at Mucha and Barrios blasted over following a neat interchange with Vera.

The opening goal came in the 27th minute when Barrios slipped the ball into the box and Vera's first-time shot with the outside of his foot flew across Mucha and in at the far post.

Slovakia had only one attempt on goal in the first half and though they were more ambitious after the interval Paraguay's organised defence kept them at bay and it was only a matter of time before the South Americans scored a second.

Vera should have put the game out of sight in the 72nd minute but he headed Santa Cruz's cross wide.

It was left to Riveros to settle matters with four minutes remaining. The Sunderland-bound midfielder curled a left-foot shot from the edge of the area past Mucha to confirm Paraguay's well-deserved victory.

John Holmesdale

On target...Riveros clinches victory over Slovakia

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Down to earth...New Zealand make life difficult for Italy's Cannavaro (no 5)

JUNE 20

ITALY 1 NEW ZEALAND 1

Italy need more than luck

MARCELLO LIPPI bemoaned his side's bad luck after they were held by New Zealand in one of the biggest shocks of the tournament.

"We didn't have much luck but it must be said we didn't play a great game," he said.

Only a Vincenzo Iaquinta penalty prevented the defending champions from dropping against a spirited New Zealand side who took an early lead through Shane Smeltz, battled courageously throughout and could even have snatched victory at the death.

Lippi picked the same team that had drawn 1-1 with Paraguay in their opening game, Federico Marchetti again standing in for the injured Gianluigi Buffon in goal – but he was picking the ball out of the net in only the seventh minute.

Italy's defence was all at sea when attempting to deal with Simon Elliot's free-kick whipped in from the left. Fabio Cannavaro, the bedrock of the team that had triumphed in Berlin four years previously, misjudged the flight and the ball sat up invitingly for Smeltz to prod past Marchetti.

It seemed inconceivable that New Zealand, a team composed of domestic part-timers together with full-timers in Australia's A-League and the English Championship could shock the world champions. But a mixture of bad luck, dogged Kiwi defending and poor Italian finishing combined to make that a distinct possibility.

The Italians quickly raised their game but did not equalise until the 29th minute, when Tommy Smith was penalised for his challenge on Daniele De Rossi in the box. Vincenzo Iaquinta converted the spot-kick.

Lippi made a double substitution at half-time, bringing in Antonio Di Natale and Mauro Camoranesi in place of Simon Pepe and Alberto Gilardino but the *Azzurri* still struggled to made the breakthrough. Iaquinta looked slow and immobile while midfielder Claudio Marchisio failed to provide the creative spark that Italy so craved.

New Zealand might even have grabbed a dramatic winner but substitute Chris Wood, a reserve at West Bromwich Albion, pulled his shot inches wide after a neat turn.

"Starting the game in such a way gave us an uphill task," said Lippi. "The side played with great desire, but we were lacking the cutting edge in certain moments."

Excuses, excuses. Italy could, and should, have done much better.

John Holmesdale

JUNE 24

SLOVAKIA 3 ITALY 2

Over and out for sad Lippi

HOLDERS Italy plunged dramatically out of the World Cup, failing at the group stage for the first time since 1974 in West Germany.

The other simultaneous game between Paraguay and New Zealand ended goalless so victory for the unrated outsiders from eastern Europe lifted them from bottom of the group to second place, condemning the Italians to the foot of the table instead.

Defeat also condemned Marcello Lippi and his men to an early flight home. Successor Cesare Prandelli will have a major task on his hands when he starts to rebuild out of the wreckage of the *Azzurri's* South African nightmare.

Lippi, close to tears, took full responsibility for Italy's demise. "I'm extremely sorry for the federation, for all our fans, the players, the president of our federation" he said. "I thought this team would be able to play in a particular way and I obviously did not prepare them properly.

"I'm sad to end my association with the federation in this fashion. I didn't expect necessarily to win the World Cup but I did expect better than this."

Both sides enjoyed a fortunate escape in the opening minutes with Marek Hamsik miskicking a volley to an awkwardly dropping cross at one end and then Vincenzo Iaquinta slicing wide when well placed, cutting in from the left, at the other.

A game which was otherwise surprisingly short of passion sprang to life in the 24th minute when Slovakia went ahead. Daniele De Rossi was caught out by Hamsik, Fabio Cannavaro and Giorgio Chiellini left a chasm between them in the heart of defence and Robert Vittek placed a deliberate shot wide of Federico Marchetti's right hand.

Lippi made two changes at half-time and just after to try to turn affairs around. Christian Maggio came on at right-back with Gianluca Zambrotta switching to the left and Fabio Quagliarella, strangely unused until now, brought on for Gennaro Gattuso on the left fringe of midfield.

Andrea Pirlo, half fit, joined the game in creative desperation on the hour to bring something like the best out of Quagliarella.

He had a shot blocked on the line by Martin Skrtel after keeper Jan Mucha only flapped away a right-wing corner, then Miroslav Stoch ran away at the other end only to screw a rasping shot wastefully wide of Marchetti's left-hand post.

Italy failed to heed the warning. In the 73rd minute they conceded a corner, cleared Hamsik's kick back out to him and he arrowed his return low towards the near post where Vittek edged ahead of Chiellini to turn home his and his country's potentially decisive second goal.

The Italians kept the game alive with a goal in the 81st minute as Quagliarella's shot was blocked after an exchange of passes with Iaquinta and Antonio Di Natale turned the ball into the empty goal.

Passion play...Slovakia celebrate Vittek's second goal

Italy's optimism did not last long. Chiellini had what he thought was an equaliser disallowed for offside by referee Howard Webb and then newly arrived Slovak substitute Kamil Kopunek ran on to a right-wing throw-in and lifted a first-touch shot over Marchetti.

A superb 25-yard drive from Quagliarella brought Italy back to 3-2 in stoppage time but it was too little, too late.

Keir Radnedge

JUNE 24

PARAGUAY 0 NEW ZEALAND 0

All Whites rue lack of ambition

PARAGUAY strolled into the knockout phase after barely breaking sweat in a drab draw with New Zealand who, despite not losing a game, were eliminated. A win in Polokwane would have propelled the All Whites to the promised land of the last 16, but even with sporting immortality beckoning they were never going to release the handbrake and play

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the sort of expansive game which is so obviously alien to them.

With the New Zealanders continuing to swear by a defence-first policy supplemented by a pair of holding midfielders, and Paraguay needing only a point to advance, all the elements were in place for a stalemate and the first half proved an almost non-event, a melange of aimless passes, over-hit crosses, total lack of fluency and dearth of goalscoring opportunities.

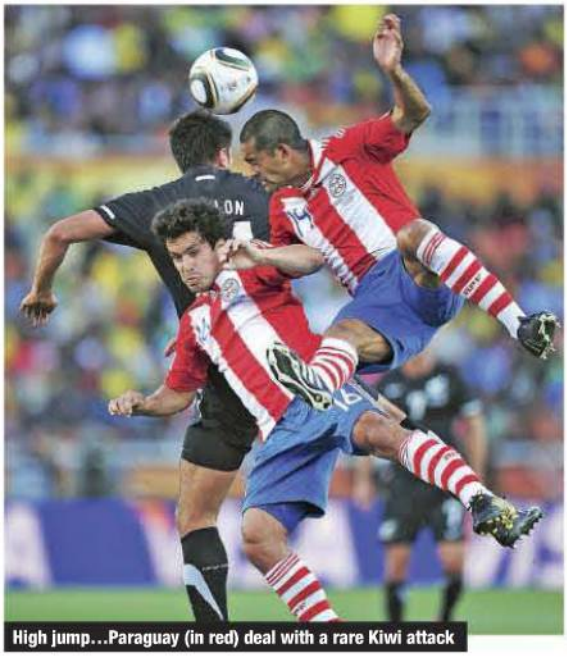
Apart from Shane Smeltz's long-range effort that flew high and wide, the All Whites' attacking threat was zero, while the sole Paraguayan to look dangerous was captain and right-back Denis Caniza, who often scampered forward with purpose and went close to scoring on the half-hour when his 20-yard shot swerved over the angle. Shortly afterwards the skipper was at it again, this time sending a dipping drive onto the roof of Mark Paston's net.

There was slightly more to set the pulse racing in the second period. Paraguay's passing took on a crisper quality, their movement off the ball improved and Paston had to react smartly to keep out a Victor Caceres header and twice save from Roque Santa Cruz. The introduction of Edgar Benitez added a degree of much needed pace and pep to the Paraguay front line but, to the immense credit of a rearguard so superbly marshalled by skipper Ryan Nelsen, the Kiwis always had the physicality and presence of mind to cope.

But that is as far as New Zealand ambition went and on the one occasion when they were in a position to aim a blow at the Paraguayan solar plexus, Simon Elliot snatched at his shot and sent it way off target.

Nick Bidwell

● New Zealand's Celeste Geertsema was the first female team doctor to look after a participating side in the history of the World Cup.



High jump…Paraguay (in red) deal with a rare Kiwi attack

MATCH DETAILS

JUNE 14 - CAPE TOWN

ITALY 1 (De Rossi 63)
PARAGUAY 1 (Alcaraz 39)
HT: 0-1. Att: 62, 869. Ref: Archundia (Mex)

ITALY (4-3-3)
Buffon (Marchetti 46) - Zambrotta, Cannavaro, Chiellini, Criscito - De Rossi, Montolivo, Marchisio (Camoranesi 59) - Pepe, Gilardino (Di Natale 72), Iaquinta.
Booked: Camoranesi.

PARAGUAY (4-4-2)
Villar - Bonet, Da Silva, Alcaraz, Morel - Vera, V Caceres, Riveros, Torres (Santana 60) - Haedo Valdez (Santa Cruz 68), Barrios (Cardozo 76).
Booked: V Caceres.

JUNE 15 - RUSTENBURG

NEW ZEALAND 1 (Reid 90)
SLOVAKIA 1 (Vittek 50)
HT: 0-0. Att: 23,871. Ref: Damon (SAf)

NEW ZEALAND (4-5-1)
Paston - Reid, Nelsen, Smith, Lochhead - Vicelich (Christie 78), Bertos, Elliott, Smeltz, Killen (Wood 72) - Fallon.
Booked: Lochhead, Reid.

SLOVAKIA (4-4-2)
Mucha - Zabavnik, Skrtel, Durica, Cech - Strba, Weiss (Kucka 90), Hamsik, Jendrisek - Vittek (Stoch 84), Sestak (Holosko 81).
Booked: Strba.

JUNE 20 - BLOEMFONTEIN

SLOVAKIA 0
PARAGUAY 2 (Vera 27, Riveros 86)
HT: 0-1. Att: 26,643. Ref: Maillet (Sey)

SLOVAKIA (4-4-2)
Mucha - Pekarik, Skrtel, Salata (Stoch 83), Durica - Sestak (Holosko 70), Strba, Hamsik, Weiss - Kozak, Vittek.
Booked: Durica, Sestak, Weiss.

PARAGUAY (4-4-2)
Villar - Morel, Da Silva, Alcaraz, Bonet - Vera (Barreto 88), Riveros, V Caceres, Santa Cruz - Haedo Valdez (Torres 68), Barrios (Cardoza 82).
Booked: Vera.

JUNE 20 - NELSPRUIT

ITALY 1 (Iaquinta pen 29)
NEW ZEALAND 1 (Smeltz 7)
HT: 1-1. Att: 38,229. Ref: Batrez (Gtm)

ITALY (4-4-2)
Marchetti - Zambrotta, Cannavaro, Chiellini, Criscito - Pepe (Camoranesi 46), Montolivo, De Rossi, Marchisio (Pazzini 61) - Iaquinta, Gilardino (Di Natale 46).
Booked: none.

NEW ZEALAND (3-4-1-2)
Paston - Reid, Nelsen, Smith - Bertos, Elliott, Vicelich (Christie 81), Lochhead - Smeltz - Fallon (Wood 63), Killen (Barron 90).
Booked: Fallon, Smith, Nelsen.

JUNE 24 - JO'BURG (Ellis Park)

SLOVAKIA 3 (Vittek 25, 73, Kopunek 89)
ITALY 2 (Di Natale 81, Quagliarella 90)
HT: 1-0. Att: 53,412. Ref: Webb (Eng)

SLOVAKIA (4-2-3-1)
Mucha - Pekarik, Skrtel, Durica, Zabavnik - Kukca, Strba (Kopunek 87) - Stoch, Hamsik, Jendrisek (Petras 90) - Vittek (Sestak 90).
Booked: Strba, Vittek, Pekarik, Mucha.

ITALY (4-3-3)
Marchetti - Zambrotta, Cannavaro, Chiellini, Criscito (Maggio 46) - Gattuso (Quagliarella 46), De Rossi, Montolivo (Pirlo 56) - Pepe, Iaquinta, Di Natale.
Booked: Cannavaro, Chiellini, Pepe, Quagliarella.

JUNE 24 - POLOKWANE

PARAGUAY 0
NEW ZEALAND 0
Att: 34,850. Ref: Nishimura (Jap)

PARAGUAY (4-3-3)
Villar - Caniza, J Cacares, Da Silva, Morel - Vera, V Cacares, Riveros - Santa Cruz, Valdez (Benitez 67), Cardozo (Barrios 66).
Booked: V Cacares, Santa Cruz.

NEW ZEALAND (3-4-3)
Paston - Reid, Nelsen, Smith - Bertos, Vicelich, Elliott, Lochhead - Killen (Brockie 79), Fallon (Wood 69), Smeltz.
Booked: Nelsen.

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	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
BRAZIL	3	2	1	0	5	2	7
PORTUGAL	3	1	2	0	7	0	5
IVORY COAST	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
NORTH KOREA	3	0	0	3	1	12	0

Turning ugly...Kaka protests his innocence as Ivory Coast's Keita lies prostrate on the turf

Brazil plough on

Favourites go through as group winners despite controversy

IT HAD BEEN dubbed the "Group of Death" but pre-tournament favourites Brazil negotiated a potentially tricky draw with relative ease, if not without controversy. They did enough against a spirited North Korea in their opening game, but were fortunate with their second goal in a 3-1 victory over Ivory Coast, when Luis Fabiano – with what he called an "accidental hand of God" – handled before scoring.

Ivory Coast coach Sven Goran Eriksson said: "The goal shouldn't have been allowed, it changed everything." The Swede may, however, have been trying to deflect attention from the game's biggest talking point: the sending-off of Kaka after Kader Keita's feigned injury.

Brazil did not pursue an appeal against Kaka's expulsion and one-match ban, while Keita escaped retrospective punishment from FIFA despite widespread condemnation of his actions.

The onus was on Ivory Coast to attack North Korea in a bid to catch Portugal, with whom they had drawn in their opening match. The Portuguese had put their goal difference seemingly out of reach with a 7-0 thrashing of North Korea in their second game. Even Cristiano Ronaldo, without an international goal in two years, broke his scoring hiatus as Portugal feasted on a punch-drunk defence.

In their final game, Brazil, with Robinho rested and Nilmar and Julio Baptista starting, could find no way through a Portugal defence which was one of only two (Uruguay being the other) not to concede a goal in the group stages.

Brazil's goalless draw with Portugal rendered immaterial Ivory Coast's failure to score more than three against North Korea. As the team seen as most likely to take Africa's challenge to the knockout stages, their exit was bitterly disappointing and Eriksson quit.

North Korea returned home having conceded 12 goals in three games. They showed more attacking ambition than expected until their capitulation to Portugal, but the future of coach Kim Jong-hun remained unclear.

Gavin Hamilton

> "Football nowadays is built on speed and technique...controlling possession has always been one of the hallmarks of Brazilian teams"
> *Brazil coach Dunga*

In your face...Cristiano Ronaldo clashes with Guy Demel

JUNE 15

IVORY COAST 0 PORTUGAL 0

Promises – but just a dull stalemate

WHAT had initially promised to be an exciting encounter, packed with plenty of attacking endeavour from both sides, was anything but as Ivory Coast and Portugal battled to a goalless draw in Port Elizabeth.

Afterwards, the coaches had different explanations on the lack of goals.

"Neither team wanted to lose," said Ivory Coast boss Sven Goran Eriksson. "We created more chances than they did, but I was more happy with our discipline and organisation. You cannot attack frenetically against a team like Portugal or they will kill you."

Portugal coach Carlos Queiroz countered: "There was only one team trying to win. We had to play with intelligence and caution though, because they had clearly set up to defend and attack on the counter. So we didn't send as many players forward as we usually do, We didn't want to risk falling into their trap."

The reality was this was a game that neither side could afford to lose as the winner would have entered games against Brazil and North Korea as clear favourites to finish second in the group.

Neither team created much in the first half. Cristiano Ronaldo had the best opportunity, hitting a fierce dipping shot just outside Boubacar Barry's right-hand post. Siaka Tiene responded for Ivory Coast, striking his free-kick past a post, while Cheik Tiote's shot flew just over the bar.

The second half promised more, especially for Ivory Coast after the introduction of Didier Drogba, still nursing a broken elbow after being injured in a pre-tournament friendly against Japan.

However, a downpour soon dampened

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expectations. Portugal had long-range efforts from Raul Meireles and Ronaldo, and Ivory Coast's Kolo Toure should have tested Portugal keeper Eduardo with a header.

Drogba did not see a chance in front of goal until injury time, but could not direct Kader Keita's pass on target.

John Holmesdale

JUNE 15

BRAZIL 2 NORTH KOREA 1

Maicon marvel starts up Brazil

AN incredible goal from raiding right-back Maicon powered Brazil on to shrug off near-freezing temperatures and defeat North Korea to achieve the opening-game success which had proved beyond the likes of Italy, England and France.

Such was their domination of possession that it was only a matter of time and effort before the record five-times world champions underlined their command with goals.

Yet the North Koreans, appearing in the finals for the first time since their remarkable adventure in 1966, held them at bay beyond half-time. The commentators' nightmare of a team, with two Paks and three Ris, worked so busily that they appeared to have all 23 players on the pitch simultaneously instead of the regulation 11.

Outstanding, both at the defensive heart of midfield and in supporting the occasional attack, was Ri Kwang-chon from the April 25 club of Pyongyang who played with a spring in his step born of the opportunity to play at the World Cup finals.

But not for long.

Brazil, as is their way under the pragmatic coach Dunga, worked and pressed and probed – and when that proved insufficient, they resorted to a little trickery from Robinho.

The inevitable breakthrough came from another source entirely, however. Maicon had already won the Champions League plus Italian League and Cup this past season with Internazionale and thus lacked nothing in confidence.

After Felipe Melo slung the ball right and Elano played it down the line, Maicon was not satisfied with crossing but put all his power into an acute-angled drive which bisected keeper Ri Myong-guk and his left-hand post and faded just inside the other upright. No wonder Jose Mourinho hopes to take Maicon with him to Real Madrid.

Seven minutes later, just to erase any element of doubt, Elano produced a finish as superb as the defence-slicing pass from Robinho. If only they had managed that during their brief spell together at Manchester City.

The Koreans, to their credit, never stopped running or working – with admirable spirit – and deserved the reward of a decisively-struck consolation goal by Ji Yun-nam in the 89th minute. It was the North Koreans' first in the World Cup finals in 44 years, since their quarter-final defeat in 1966 by group rivals Portugal.

Keir Radnedge

JUNE 20

BRAZIL 3 IVORY COAST 1

Kaka red card row

THE sending off of Kaka after blatant gamesmanship by Ivory Coast midfielder Kader Keita overshadowed a routine win by Brazil, who qualified for the knockout stage with a game to spare.

Kaka was shown a second yellow card after he pushed an elbow into the midriff of Keita, who reacted by clutching his face and tumbling theatrically.

French referee Stephane Lannoy came under fire for not only expelling Kaka but also for allowing Brazil's second goal, which was scored by Luis Fabiano after he had controlled the ball with an arm.

That goal, after 50 minutes, effectively ended the game as a contest. Until that point, Ivory Coast, with Didier Drogba restored to the starting line-up, had played some neat football without ever threatening Brazil's goal.

The Ivorians were well organised by Sven Goran Eriksson but their defensive outlook meant they were unable to provide much support to lone striker Drogba, who was wearing a special protective cast on the elbow that had been fractured 16 days previously.

With Brazil's full-backs pegged back, it was left to the front quartet of Luis Fabiano, Kaka, Robinho and Elano to press and probe for openings.

Eventually, Brazil broke through. Kaka, though not operating at 100 per cent, slipped in Luis Fabiano, who thumped his shot from a tight angle over keeper Boubacar Barry.

Handy...Luis Fabiano scores a controversial second

Once ahead, Brazil were in complete control, though it took a handball to help them on their way. Luis Fabiano took advantage of the Ivorian defenders' confusion after they failed to clear a bouncing ball. He jinked the ball over Didier Zokora and Kolo Toure but then controlled the ball with his arm before crashing the ball past Barry.

Substitute Gervinho gave the Ivorians a more direct route on the right flank. He supplied Drogba with an inviting cross but his captain headed wide.

The more Ivory Coast pushed forward, the more space they left for Brazil to exploit. Kaka broke clear on the left, burst to the byline and crossed for Elano for an easy tap-in for Brazil's third.

With 10 minutes remaining Drogba pulled a goal back, flicking a fizzing cross past Julio Cesar. But it was a rare opening on a night when he had been left isolated.

In injury time, controversy. Kaka and Keita clashed as play resumed following an apparent challenge on Cheik Tiote. The Ivorians were unhappy that a foul had not been awarded and, in the aftermath, Kaka pushed away Keita, whose theatrical response was enough to convince Lannoy to send off a bemused Brazilian.

Gavin Hamilton

Long time coming...Ji Yun-nam celebrates his goal against Brazil

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Raining goals...Cristiano Ronaldo ends his international drought

JUNE 20

PORTUGAL 7 NORTH KOREA 0

Portuguese goal difference gets a welcome boost

CRISTIANO RONALDO had not scored an international goal for over two years but even he managed to find the target in Portugal's demolition of North Korea.

"I said to everyone that I knew the goal was coming," he said afterwards. "Not just for me, but for the whole team. To score seven goals is just amazing."

Ronaldo, having rediscovered his goalscoring touch, also showed a rare moment of humility when he handed his man-of-the-match award to Tiago, scorer of two of Portugal's seven goals.

"Tiago was our best player and he played better than me. It was the right thing to do," said Ronaldo.

The scoreline suggested some explaining for North Korea once they returned home, but for the first half they had matched Portugal and might even have scored.

The ball fizzed around the wet surface in the early stages and some players lost their footing in the wet conditions. Ricardo Carvalho hit the woodwork with a header from a corner early on, but the Koreans adapted well to the wet conditions and went close to scoring when Portugal keeper Eduardo could only parry Hong Yong-jo's powerful shot. The ball fell to midfielder Pak Nam-chol but he could not direct his header on target.

North Korea may have been more adventurous than expected but it was Portugal who took the lead just before the half-hour mark as the midfield began to seize the initiative. Tiago's pass split the Korean defence and Raul Meireles ran from deep to prod the ball past Ri Myong-guk.

In the second half Portugal's midfield took control with more fluid passing as full-backs Miguel and Fabio Coentrao pushed forward.

A second goal duly arrived in the 53rd minute. Raul Meireles and Hugo Almeida combined on the edge of the area to send Simao clear to score.

A North Korea capitulation was on the cards and they barely had time to compose themselves before Portugal had scored a third. Cristiano Ronaldo played in Fabio Coentrao down the left flank and his cross was met by Hugo Almeida's unstoppable header.

Portugal added a fourth in the 60th minute when Tiago directed a Ronaldo pass past Ri from the edge of the area.

Substitute Liedson added to the goal haul when Ri Kwang-chon sliced his clearance from another sub Duda. The ball fell kindly for Liedson, who thumped a volley past Ri.

The watching Eusebio saw Cristiano Ronaldo and Hugo Almeida add goals six and seven to put their goal difference beyond the reach of group rivals Ivory Coast.

North Korea, dazed and confused, were left pondering how they could salvage any pride after such a savage humiliation.

Gavin Hamilton

JUNE 25

PORTUGAL 0 BRAZIL 0

Honours even in dull Durban draw

THE most eagerly anticipated match of the group stages – billed as a meeting of the two best exponents of the beautiful game – turned out to be something less attractive as both sides knew in advance that a draw would be enough for qualification.

With tickets in huge demand, and fans of both nations flocking to Durban, a bumper crowd at the Moses Mabhida Stadium was expecting the feast of "spectacular football" as promised by coaches Carlos Queiroz and Dunga beforehand. However, what the crowd got was somewhat different.

The first-half was notable mostly for seven yellow cards – the most dished out in one half of a game at the tournament to date. Not all were for foul play: Duda, the Portugal midfielder, was booked for waving an imaginary card in a bid to get Brazil's Juan cautioned for a foul, while team-mate Tiago was carded for diving in an unsuccessful bid to win a penalty.

Efforts on goal were few and far between. Nilmar went closest to breaking the deadlock after 30 minutes, when the Brazil forward's shot from a tight angle was tipped onto the angle of post and crossbar by goalkeeper Eduardo. Luis Fabiano then got his head to Maicon's deep cross from the right but the Brazilian missed the target from close range.

At the opposite end, Cristiano Ronaldo tried a few long-range shots without success, struggling to master the ball as two of his trademark free-kicks went high and wide.

Ronaldo did create Portugal's best chance, when he sprinted into the Brazil penalty area after an hour and squared the ball for Raul Meireles, only to see the midfielder flick his shot wide of goal.

In stoppage time, Eduardo clawed the ball away after Brazil substitute Ramires' shot hit defender Bruno Alves and looped high in the air. His stop ensured that Brazil failed to score in a group game for the first time since a goalless draw with Spain in 1978.

Afterwards Dunga said: "Portugal didn't want to attack, they just wanted to defend."

But Queiroz was unrepentant after his side's 20th clean sheet in 24 games since he took over. "It was a great game and a draw was a fair result," said the Portugal coach.

There are few who would agree with both parts of that statement.

Gerry Cox

In denial...Brazil keeper Julio Cesar saves from Danny

JUNE 25

NORTH KOREA 0 IVORY COAST 3

Too little, too late for Ivorians

GUILTY of only turning pro-active when a mathematical miracle was required to qualify for the next round, the once hotly-tipped Ivory Coast finally cast off the shackles of coach Sven Goran Eriksson in this totally one-sided affair, but the result was ultimately rendered academic by the goalless draw played out by Brazil and Portugal.

North Korea's record in South Africa reads three games, three defeats and a 12-1 goal differential, not to mention a naivety and an emphasis on damage limitation which was all too apparent here in Nelspruit.

Ivory Coast, backed vociferously by the massed ranks of their orange-clad supporters, knew they had to win big – by at least nine clear goals – to have any chance whatsoever of progressing. Yet judging by the way they jumped out of their corner swinging, they clearly felt it was not mission impossible.

Barely 60 seconds had elapsed when midfielder Kader Keita was denied by the right-boot of keeper Ri Myong-guk. Didier Drogba had a headed goal ruled out for offside shortly after and left-winger Gervinho twice

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tip-toed into the danger zone without an end-product before the West Africans took the lead, the adventurous full-back Arthur Boka bursting forward and cutting the ball back to Yaya Toure, who took a touch before curling the ball into the far corner.

Elephants' midfielder Romaric struck the outside of the post four minutes later, but was soon on the score sheet, heading home after Drogba crashed a close-quarters effort onto the underside of the crossbar.

Confronted by a team with infinitely more pace and power than themselves, North Korea's only recourse was to pull every man behind the ball, though they did go close midway through the half when skipper Hong Yong-jo was narrowly off target with a well-flighted free-kick.

The Ivorians continued to flood forward at

On a mission...Drogba (left) clashes with Korea's Ji Yun-nam

every opportunity in the second-half and certainly had a number of reasonable chances to go further ahead. Emmanuel Eboue went on a slalom down the right flank, only to lash the ball across the face of goal, and Drogba sent a diving header wide. Then Gervinho just failed to connect with Keita's excellent low cross from the right.

Far more organised at the back in the second period, North Korea even found the spirit to indulge in a counter-attack or two and nine minutes from time could have pulled a goal back. Set up by a wonderful Choe Kum-chol chipped pass, striker Jong Tae-se bore down on goal with his usual vigour but had his first shot saved by keeper Boubacar Barry and could do no better when following up the rebound, this time thwarted by a Kolo Toure block.

Almost immediately the Ivorians scored again, Boka whipping in a left-footed cross for sub Salomon Kalou to adroitly sidefoot in.

World Cup lesson number one for the Ivory Coast: forget the calculations, just go out and play.

Nick Bidwell

MATCH DETAILS

JUNE 15 - PORT ELIZABETH

IVORY COAST 0
PORTUGAL 0
Att: 37,034. Ref: Larrionda (Uru)

IVORY COAST (4-1-2-3)
Barry - Demel, K Toure, Zokora, Tiene - Y Toure - Eboue (Romaric 89), Tiote - Kalou (Drogba 66), Dindane, Gervinho (Keita 82).
Booked: Zokora, Demel.

PORTUGAL (4-3-3)
Eduardo - Paulo Ferriera, Bruno Alves, Ricardo Carvalho, Fabio Coentrao - Pedro Mendes, Deco (Tiago 62), Raul Meireles (Ruben Amorim 85)- Cristiano Ronaldo, Liedson, Danny (Simao 55).
Booked: Cristiano Ronaldo.

JUNE 15 - JO'BURG (Ellis Park)

BRAZIL 2 (Maicon 55, Elano 72)
NORTH KOREA 1 (Ji Yun-nam 89)
HT: 0-0. Att: 54,331. Ref: Kassai (Hun)

BRAZIL (4-2-3-1)
Julio Cesar - Maicon, Lucio, Juan, Michel Bastos - Gilberto Silva, Felipe Melo (Ramires 84) - Elano (Dani Alves 73), Kaka (Nilmar 78), Robinho - Luis Fabiano.
Booked: Ramires.

NORTH KOREA (5-4-1)
Ri Myong-guk - Cha Jong-hyok, Pak Chol-jin, Ri Jun-il, Pak Nam-Chol (M), Ri Kwang-chon - Mun In-guk (Kim Kum-il 80), Hong Yong-jo, An Yong-hak, Ji Yun-nam - Jong Tae-se.
Booked: none.

JUNE 20 - JO'BURG (Soccer City)

BRAZIL 3 (Luis Fabiano 25,50, Elano 62)
IVORY COAST 1 (Drogba 79)
HT: 1-0. Att: 84,455. Ref: Lannoy (Fra)

BRAZIL (4-2-3-1)
Julio Ceasr - Maicon, Lucio, Juan, Michel Bastos - Felipe Melo, Gilberto Silva - Elano (Dani Alves 67), Kaka, Robinho (Ramires 90) - Luis Fabiano.
Booked: Kaka.
Sent off: Kaka (88mins).

IVORY COAST (4-3-2-1)
Barry - Demel, K Toure, Zokora, Tiene - Eboue (Romaric 72), Y Toure, Tiote - Dindane (Gervinho 54), Kalou (Keita 68) - Drogba.
Booked: Tiene, Keita, Tiote.

JUNE 21 - CAPE TOWN

PORTUGAL 7 (Raul Meireles 29, Simao 53, Hugo Almeida 56, Tiago 60, 89, Liedson 81, Cristiano Ronaldo 87)
NORTH KOREA 0
HT: 1-0. Att: 63,644. Ref: Pozo (Chl)

PORTUGAL (4-3-3)
Eduardo - Miguel, Ricardo Carvalho, Bruno Alves, Fabio Coentrao - Tiago, Pedro Mendes, Raul Meireles (Miguel Veloso 70) - Simao (Duda 74), Hugo Almeida (Liedson 77), Cristiano Ronaldo.
Booked: Pedro Mendes, Hugo Almeida.

NORTH KOREA (5-4-1)
Ri Myong-guk - Cha Jong-hyok (Nam Song-chol 75), Pak Chol-jin, Ri Jun-il, Ji Yun-nam, Ri Kwang-chon - Mun In-guk (Kim Yong-jun 58), Pak Nam-chol (M) (Kim Kum-il 58), An Yong-hak, Hong Yong-jo - Jong Tae-se.
Booked: Pak Chol-jin, Hong Yong-jo.

JUNE 25 - DURBAN

PORTUGAL 0
BRAZIL 0
Att: 62,712. Ref: Archundia (Mex)

PORTUGAL (4-3-2-1)
Eduardo - Ricardo Costa, Ricardo Carvalho, Bruno Alves, Fabio Coentrao - Tiago, Pepe (Pedro Mendes 64), Raul Meireles (Miguel Veloso 84) - Danny, Duda (Simao 54) - Cristiano Ronaldo.
Booked: Duda, Tiago, Pepe, Fabio Coentrao.

BRAZIL (4-2-3-1)
Julio Cesar - Maicon, Lucio, Juan, Michel Bastos - Gilberto Silva, Felipe Melo (Josue 44) - Dani Alves, Julio Baptista (Ramires 82), Nilmar - Luis Fabiano (Grafite 85).
Booked: Luis Fabiano, Juan, Felipe Melo.

JUNE 25 - NELSPRUIT

NORTH KOREA 0
IVORY COAST 3 (Y Toure 14, Romaric 20, Kalou 82)
HT: 0-2. Att: 34,763. Ref: Undiano (Spa)

NORTH KOREA (5-4-1)
Ri Myong-guk - Cha Jong-hyok, Pak Chol-jin, Ri Jun-il, Ji Yun-nam, Ri Kwang-chon - Hong Yong-jo, Pak Nam-chol (M), An Yong-hak, Mun In-guk (Choe Kum-chol 67) - Jong Tae-se.
Booked: none.

IVORY COAST (4-3-3)
Barry - Eboue, K Toure, Zokora, Boka - Romaric (Doumbia 79), Y Toure, Tiote - Keita (Dindane 64), Drogba, Gervinho (Kalou 64).
Booked: none.

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WORLD CUP 2010 GROUP H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
SPAIN	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
CHILE	3	2	0	1	3	2	6
SWITZERLAND	3	1	1	1	1	1	4
HONDURAS	3	0	1	2	0	3	1

Predator...Gelson Fernandes (left) is set to pounce for Switzerland in the Spain penalty area

Back from the brink

European champions recover from early shock to progress

THE GROUP opened with one of the biggest shocks of recent times: the defeat of reigning European champions – and much-fancied pre-tournament favourites – Spain by Switzerland. Spain had won 12 consecutive games and lost just once in their previous 49 matches and defeat against the Swiss raised the possibility of Spain finishing second in the group and meeting Brazil in the second round.

Weakened by injuries – Fernando Torres and Andres Iniesta were not fully fit – but with David Villa in fine form, Spain eventually recovered with wins over Honduras and Chile to top the group.

Chile played some of the best football of the tournament. With maverick coach Marcelo Bielsa advocating a bold 3-4-3 formation, they might have managed more than the single-goal victories over Honduras and Switzerland if striker Humberto Suazo had been fit.

Going into the last round of games there was still the possibility that Switzerland could snatch second spot at the expense of Chile, and that appeared a strong possibility when Chile were reduced to 10 men against Spain following the sending-off of Mario Estrada.

However the Swiss failed to make the breakthrough against Honduras and Chile, to the delight of fans of attacking football, finished second.

After their heroics against Spain, Switzerland had reason to complain when they were reduced to 10 men in their next game, against Chile, when Valon Behrami was sent off with Arturo Vidal accused of play-acting. Though their defence was among the tightest in the tournament, Switzerland's failure in front of goal against Honduras ensured their departure. "We didn't deserve to qualify because we didn't score," said coach Ottmar Hitzfeld bluntly.

Honduras, in their first World Cup since 1982, found there was no substitute for experience. "We shouldn't have waited until the last match to show our talents, we should have done it in the first one," complained coach Reinaldo Rueda.

Gavin Hamilton

> "We had no margin for error after losing our first game. Our fate was in our hands and we managed to go through"
>
> *Spain's Andres Iniesta*

In the thick of it...Chile's Arturo Vidal (no 8) against Honduras

JUNE 16

HONDURAS 0
CHILE 1

Bielsa's side off to a winning start

CHILE secured their first World Cup win for almost half a century, but their attack-minded formation should have delivered more goals in Nelspruit against a defensive Honduras side.

There was an element of luck about Jean Beausejour's winning goal in the 34th minute – the ball cannoned off Beausejour and into the net as Honduran defender Sergio Mendoza tried to clear Mauricio Isla's cross – but it was the least Chile deserved for their positive approach and the goal ensured a first finals' victory since they beat Yugoslavia in the third-place play-off on home soil in 1962.

Marcelo Bielsa's side continued where they left off in qualifying with a bold formation that pinned Honduras in their own half for most of the game.

Matias Fernandez had sent a warning to Honduras as early as the third minute with a free-kick dipping just over Noel Valladares's goal.

Chile's victory was never in doubt after Beausejour's goal, but Bielsa's men should have added to the scoreline, with the exciting Alexis Sanchez the main culprit. In the 62nd minute, Jorge Valdivia played him in down the right, but Sanchez pulled his shot past the far post.

Two minutes later Valladares pulled off an outstanding save, diving at full stretch to push out Waldo Ponce's close-range header.

Injured striker Humberto Suazo might have added a cutting edge to Chile's exciting build-up play. But the single goal proved to be enough for a Chilean side that had laid down a marker as the tournament's most inventive and creative team.

John Holmesdale

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JUNE 16

SPAIN 0 SWITZERLAND 1

Swiss shock one of the favourites

SPAIN passed, passed and passed again, but they could not find their way through massed defensive ranks as Switzerland provided the first big shock of the tournament by beating the favourites in Durban.

In the pre-match build-up, much had been made of Spain's style and their record of going 35 matches unbeaten until their defeat to the USA in last year's Confederations Cup. Meanwhile, Switzerland's record of four clean sheets in their four matches at the 2006 World Cup had been overlooked. By keeping Spain at bay, Ottmar Hitzfeld's side equalled Italy's World Cup record of five successive clean sheets.

Spain's much-vaunted midfield lacked width and struggled to provide decent service for lone striker David Villa, who toiled in vain without Fernando Torres, who appeared as a second-half substitute but was clearly far from full fitness.

The Spain midfield had the edge of Switzerland's more defensive 4-4-2 set-up in the first half but they could not translate their superior possession into goalscoring opportunities. Spain's best chance of the game fell to a defender, Gerard Pique, who had remained in the penalty area following a set-piece. He turned tightly but Diego Benaglio saved well with his feet.

After half an hour, Andres Iniesta was played in by David Silva but Stephane Grichting was happy to take the yellow card for stopping him. Pique blasted the resulting free-kick against the wall.

The pattern of elegant Spain possession continued in the second half but with one difference – Switzerland struck on the counter-attack.

In the 52nd minute, after Sergio Busquets had skewed another missed opportunity for Spain over the bar, Switzerland scored. The Spanish defence failed to handle a long ball from the back which eventually fell to Gelson Fernandes, who scrambled the ball over the line.

Spain brought on Torres and Jesus Navas for David Silva and Busquets and furiously chased the game.

Andres Iniesta curled a shot just wide in the 62nd minute and Xabi Alonso's thunderbolt crashed off the bar in the 70th minute as Spain's pressure mounted.

Eren Derdiyok might even have extended Switzerland's lead when he beat two defenders but his shot hit a post and rebounded to Spanish keeper Iker Casillas.

A furious finish saw Xavi's volley fly over as Spain finally admitted defeat.

"There was not a huge fire in our penalty area, we were not trembling," said Swiss coach Hitzfeld. "Our objective was to have compact rows of players and wait for counter attacks. If you play attacking against Spain they will score goal after goal."

Gavin Hamilton

JUNE 21

CHILE 1 SWITZERLAND 0

Record-breaking Swiss defence breached

ARGUABLY the most fluid and entertaining team at the tournament, though prone to profligacy in front of goal, Chile showed both sides of their dual-personality in this encounter, struggling to break down the brave resistance of 10-man Switzerland until substitute Mark Gonzalez headed the winner a quarter of an hour from time.

Switzerland defended as stoutly as they had done in their shock opening victory over Spain, yet ultimately they would be undermined by a lack of ambition early on and the dismissal on the half-hour of midfielder Valon Behrami, who was sent off by finicky Saudi referee Khalil Al Ghamdi for thrusting an arm into the face of Arturo Vidal.

Switzerland coach, Ottmar Hitzfeld, claimed in the post-match press conference that Vidal's histrionics had transformed an accidental clash into a red-card offence. However, Behrami must take his share of the blame too, clearly inviting trouble with his reckless attempt at holding off the player.

● Some Spain fans blamed TV reporter Sara Carbonero for the defeat to Switzerland. They claim she distracted boyfriend Iker Casillas when filming behind his goal.

While Switzerland have to be applauded for the way they never lost their shape and their ability to close down opponents, Chile were the only side looking to impose themselves on the sub-standard Port Elizabeth turf. Always a thrilling sight thanks to their passing and movement, and a total commitment to attack, the South Americans made chance after chance but, as is their want, could not deliver the coup de grace.

Crowded out...Switzerland (in white) repel Chile again

Back in the side after injury, striker Humberto Suazo was particularly wasteful in the first half, guilty of both an embarrassing air shot when set up by the lively Alexis Sanchez and a poor header following a left-wing cross from Jean Beausejour.

With the Swiss blocking all avenues and the Chileans too frenzied in their thought patterns, an against-the-odds European point looked increasingly on the cards. But on 75 minutes *La Roja* finally found a way through. For once the Swiss offside trap failed to function and, set free on the right flank, Chile sub Esteban Paredes beat out-rushing Swiss keeper Diego Benaglio to the ball and crossed to the far post, where the South Africa-born Gonzalez nodded home. It was the first goal Switzerland had conceded in a record 558 minutes of World Cup finals' football.

At last an end-to-end contest would ensue. Twice clean through, Paredes culpably missed the target on both occasions and with almost the last kick of the game, the Swiss sub Eren Derdiyok side-footed a Reto Ziegler cut-back wide with the goal at his mercy.

One Swiss chance and so very nearly one Swiss goal. That's what you call functional.

Nick Bidwell

Upset...Fernandes surprises Spain

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Opener...Villa gets off the mark against Honduras

JUNE 21

SPAIN 2
HONDURAS 0

Villa double gets Spain back on track

SPAIN won their second group match with some ease to wipe away the shock of defeat to Switzerland. David Villa scored both goals and also missed a penalty.

Yet the performance, as pleasing to the eye as it was for much of the game, also left coach Vicente Del Bosque a little frustrated. Once again, there was a tendency for over-elaboration in the opposition half rather than a ruthless eye for goal.

Xavi was a particular culprit, sometimes playing a pass when he could have taken a shooting opportunity.

The coach admitted as much afterwards, saying: "We certainly paved the way for the third group match against Chile, but this hasn't been a great game.

"We had glorious chances, many chances, and we should have won the game by more goals, so I'm not entirely satisfied."

The most biting criticism of Spain is that they are "excessively baroque" – a lovely phrase for being too clever by half. Against Honduras there was some attempt to be more direct, an example of which delivered the opening goal for Villa in the 17th minute.

Gerard Pique found him on the left wing with a long diagonal pass and Villa then cut inside with a slalom dribble past three defenders before shooting into the top corner.

By then, Spain might have been several goals up. Villa hit the bar with a long-range drive and Fernando Torres shot over from 10 yards. One frustration for coach Del Bosque, surely, was the inability of winger Jesus Navas to get behind the Honduras defence.

A swift counter-attack early in the second half gave Villa the space to score his second from 20 yards via a slight deflection. However, he missed the chance to complete his hat-trick when side-footing wide of the post from the penalty spot after Navas had been tripped by Emilio Izaguirre.

Torres had been playing from the start and still looking ring-rusty from an injury-plagued club season, but Del Bosque said afterwards he detected signs that his main striker was returning towards top form.

Honduras had little possession and rarely threatened a goal themselves, restricted to long-range shots that did not trouble Spain goalkeeper Iker Casillas.

By the end Spain were in second gear, preserving their energy for matches ahead.

Jim Holden

JUNE 25

CHILE 1
SPAIN 2

Top two happy to settle for what they've got

EVEN though Spain beat Chile, both sides went through to the second round because Switzerland were held goalless by Honduras.

Progress was a relief for the stuttering European champions and delight for the Chileans, who had appeared on the brink of elimination after they went two goals down in the first half and had midfielder Marco Estrada sent off.

Spain began in assertive mood, sending Fernando Torres in pursuit of a couple of aerial salvoes – the first of which he headed over, the second being cleared off his toes by Gonzalo Jara.

Chile responded equally positively. Mark Gonzalez ballooned a shot over the bar as he raced to catch a right-wing cross, then Alexis Sanchez very nearly caught Iker Casillas off his line with a cheeky lob that forced Spain's captain to palm the ball away for a corner.

Mexican referee Marco Rodriguez flashed yellow cards at Chile's Gary Medel, Waldo Ponce and Marco Estrada in quick succession as nerves began to get the better of the South American side.

No misjudgment, however, was more lethal than that of goalkeeper Claudio Bravo in th 24th minute. He dashed from his penalty area to clear a long Xabi Alonso pass ahead of the onrushing Torres only to plant the ball at the feet of David Villa, who lifted the ball gently 40 yards into the unguarded net with his supposedly weaker left foot.

Villa was actually fortunate to be playing after FIFA's disciplinary commission took no action against him for slapping Emilio Izaguirre of Honduras in Spain's previous game in an off-the-ball incident to which the player had even owned up.

Estrada was lucky not to be carded again after another reckless tackle before Jean Beausejour wasted another Chile opening. Dashing through on the left he delayed his shot a fraction too long and Gerard Pique put in a foot to deflect the ball for a corner.

It was a highly costly miss. In the 37th minute Andres Iniesta slotted home a second Spanish goal after a one-two with Villa – and Estrada was sent off for tripping Torres in the build-up.

Torres, having collapsed as if dead, promptly got up to be accused by the Chileans of cheating. Estrada, to be fair, was fortunate to have been still on the pitch.

Xabi Alonso needed treatment in the 45th minute after being thrown down by Ponce and it looked as though Chile might lose several more players before the final whistle.

Their nerves were calmed, however, by a goal barely a minute into the second half. Newly arrived substitute Rodrigo Millar saw his shot deceive Casillas with the major assistance of a deflection off Pique.

Beyond doubt...Iniesta settles things for Spain

Spain now appeared happy to hold what they had. Coach Vicente Del Bosque sent on midfielder Cesc Fabregas in place of Torres, then brought further fresh legs into midfield by replacing Alonso with Javi Martinez.

By now Chile, knowing the score and the situation, had stopped playing the game and were merely massed back in their own half to play out time while Spain knocked the ball about complicitly among themselves until the final whistles in both stadia set the Chilean fans celebrating.

Keir Radnedge

JUNE 25

SWITZERLAND 0
HONDURAS 0

Lack of firepower costs Switzerland

SWITZERLAND coach Ottmar Hltzfeld had good reason to thank his keeper Diego Benaglio for keeping a clean sheet against

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Honduras in the final group match. But it was his side's failure to land a killer blow at the other end of the pitch that ensured they departed the tournament.

"We had an incredible Benaglio who kept us in the game," said Hitzfeld afterwards. "But as far as our creative play...that's not something I can be happy with. I'm not happy with my strikers, either."

Both sides needed a win to have any chance of progressing to the second round of the competition but neither side could find their feet in front of goal. While Hitzfeld had good reason to rue his strikers, Honduras actually missed more chances.

Switzerland deployed Tranquillo Barnetta in place of the suspended Valon Behrami but he missed the first chance of the match, in the 10th minute, when he shot wide after a neat one-two with Gokhan Inler.

Barnetta then set up Eren Derdiyok but the striker took too long to shoot and the Honduran defence recovered. Derdiyok turned provider two minutes before half-time but Blaise Nkufo fluffed the chance.

Honduras had the better of the early exchanges in the second half and David Suazo should have scored in the 53rd minute but he could not direct his header on target after a great ball from Edgar Alvarez.

Switzerland's fortunes picked up with the arrival of substitute Hakan Yakin and Derdiyok went close with a right-footed shot on the hour mark.

Benaglio was then on hand to deny Suazo with a brilliant save, tipping over to ensure the deadlock was not broken.

John Holmesdale

● Honduras' three Palacios brothers were the first trio of siblings to be included in a World Cup squad after Jerry got a late call-up to join Jhony and Wilson.

Swiss under attack...Honduras' Osman Chavez (no 2) causes problems

MATCH DETAILS

JUNE 16 - NELSPRUIT

HONDURAS 0
CHILE 1 (Beausejour 34)
HT: 0-1. Att: 32,664. Ref: Maillet (Sey)

HONDURAS (4-4-2)
Valladares - Mendoza, Chavez, Figueroa, Izaguirre - Alvarez, W Palacios, Guevara (Thomas 66), Espinoza - Nunez (Martinez 78), Pavon (Welcome 60).
Booked: W Palacios.

CHILE (4-3-3)
Bravo - Isla, Medel, Ponce, Vidal (Contreras 81) - Millar (Jara 52), Carmona, Fernandez - Sanchez, Valdivia (Gonzalez 87), Beausejour.
Booked: Carmona, Fernandez.

JUNE 16 - DURBAN

SPAIN 0
SWITZERLAND 1 (Fernandes 52)
HT: 0-0. Att: 62,453. Ref: Webb (Eng)

SPAIN (4-3-2-1)
Casillas - Sergio Ramos, Pique, Puyol, Capdevila - Busquets (Torres 61), Xavi, Xabi Alonso - Iniesta (Pedro 77), David Silva (Navas 62) - Villa.
Booked: none.

SWITZERLAND (4-4-1-1)
Benaglio - Lichtsteiner, Senderos (Von Bergen 36), Grichting, Ziegler - Barnetta (Eggimann 90), Inler, Huggel, Fernandes - Derdiyok (Yakin 79) - Nkufu.
Booked: Grichting, Ziegler, Benaglio, Yakin.

JUNE 21 - PORT ELIZABETH

CHILE 1 (Gonzalez 75)
SWITZERLAND 0
HT: 34,872. 0-0. Att: Ref: Al Ghamdi (Sau)

CHILE (4-3-3)
Bravo - Isla, Medel, Ponce, Jara - Vidal (Valdivia 46), Carmona, Fernandez (Paredes 65) - Sanchez, Suazo (Gonzalez 46), Beausejour.
Booked: Suazo, Carmona, Ponce, Fernandez, Medel, Valdivia

SWITZERLAND (4-4-2)
Benaglio - Lichtsteiner, Von Bergen, Grichting, Ziegler - Behrami, Inler, Huggel, Fernandes (Bunjaku 77) - Frei (Barnetta 42), Nkufo (Derdiyok 68).
Booked: Nkufo, Barnetta, Inler
Sent off: Behrami (31mins).

JUNE 21 - JO'BURG (Ellis Park)

SPAIN 2 (Villa 17, 51)
HONDURAS 0
HT: 1-0. Att: 54,386. Ref: Nishimura (Jap)

SPAIN (4-3-3)
Casillas - Sergio Ramos (Arbeloa 76), Pique, Puyol, Capdevila - Busquets, Xavi (Fabregas 66), Xabi Alonso - Navas, Torres (Mata 70), Villa.
Booked: none.

HONDURAS (4-5-1)
Valladares - Mendoza, Chavez, Figueroa, Izaguirre - Martinez, Guevara, W Palacios, Turcios (Nunez 63), Espinoza (Welcome 46) - Suazo (Jerry Palacios 84).
Booked: Turcios, Izaguirre.

JUNE 25 - PRETORIA

CHILE 1 (Millar 47)
SPAIN 2 (Villa 24, Iniesta 37)
HT: 0-2. Att: 41,958. Ref: Rodriguez (Mex)

CHILE (4-3-3)
Bravo - Isla, Medel, Ponce, Jara - Vidal, Estrada, Gonzalez (Millar 46) - Sanchez (Orellana 65), Valdivia (Paredes 46), Beausejour.
Booked: Medel, Ponce, Estrada.
Sent off: Estrada 37mins.

SPAIN (4-3-3)
Casillas - Sergio Ramos, Pique, Puyol, Capdevila - Busquets, Xavi, Xabi Alonso (Martinez 73) - Iniesta, Torres (Fabregas 55), Villa.
Booked: none.

JUNE 25 - BLOEMFONTIEN

SWITZERLAND 0
HONDURAS 0
Att: 28,042. Ref: Baldassi (Arg)

SWITZERLAND (4-4-2)
Benaglio - Lichtsteiner, Von Bergen, Grichting, Ziegler - Barnetta, Huggel (Shaqiri 78), Inler, Fernandes (Yakin 46) - Derdiyok, Nkufo (Frei 69).
Booked: Fernandes.

HONDURAS (4-4-2)
Valladares - Sabillon, Chavez, Bernardez, Figueroa - Alvarez, W Palacios, Thomas, Nunez (Martinez 67) - Jerry Palacios (Welcome 78), Suazo (Turcios 87).
Booked: Thomas, Suazo, Chavez, W Palacios.

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Singing in the rain…Suarez is chased by Uruguay's bench as he celebrates the goal that took them into the last eight

Predator Suarez makes all the difference

JUNE 26

URUGUAY 2
SOUTH KOREA 1

SCHIZOPHRENIC Uruguay, alternatively a vibrant attacking force and ultra-defensive purveyors of old-style catenaccio, did just enough to prevail in a rain-drenched encounter at the Nelson Mandela Bay Stadium in Port Elizabeth, two goals from star striker Luis Suarez sealing their first appearance in a World Cup quarter-final since 1970, when they finished a commendable fourth.

It was a close-run thing, though. As nimble, effervescent and committed as ever, the South Koreans dominated for long periods, especially in the second half, and certainly made as many chances as their opponents. But what ultimately would cost them was their lack of firepower – the absence of a natural-born goalscorer. Uruguay boast two such predators in the shape of Suarez and Diego Forlan, while for all his feverish dash, spirit and technical ability, the Korean leader of the line, Park Chu-young, is by no stretch of the imagination a finishing machine.

Even so, the player who plies his trade in France with Monaco, came very close indeed to being the hero of the hour. A mere five minutes into the game, Park Chu-young's excellently flighted free-kick struck the outside of Fernando Muslera's right-hand post and that fine effort would not be his last moment in the thick of the action. He narrowly missed the target with a fizzing long-range shot on the half-hour and wildly smashed a half-volley over the bar after the ball broke kindly to him in the second-half.

Uruguay, by way of contrast, live and breathe on sharp intakes of opportunistic breath and proved it when taking advantage of poor Korean defending to take the lead after eight minutes. Forlan's cross from the left should have been dealt with but, for reasons unknown, keeper Jung Sung-ryong let the ball bounce past him and the back four froze, leaving the scandalously unmarked Suarez with all the time in the world to slot home from a tight angle.

Without throwing excessive numbers forward, Uruguay still looked the better team for most of the first period, good in possession, very disciplined in the way they kept their compact shape and probably deserving of a penalty when a Suarez shot appeared to hit the raised arm of increasingly panicky centre-back Lee Jung-soo.

South Korea, meanwhile, were finding it hard to get their act together. Defensively they were all at sea and too often they resorted to hopeful shots from the most improbable of distances.

But it was a completely different story after the break. Misguidedly opting to sit deep and circle the wagons, the Uruguayans handed over the initiative – and against opponents as busy and strong-willed as the Koreans, this could well have proved their downfall.

First to every loose ball, neat and nimble in their build-up and working the flanks intelligently, the Asians began to turn the screw. Park Chu-young missed the aforementioned sitter, a Park Ji-sung header from Cha Du-ri 's cross forced an agile stop from Muslera, while Edinson Cavani was lucky not to concede a penalty for a clumsy challenge which sent Ki Sung-yueng sprawling.

No surprise

The tide decidedly had turned and it was no surprise when the equaliser came after 68 minutes, Lee Chung-yong nodding in after the Uruguayan defenders and keeper went indecision-crazy following a free-kick chipped into the box.

With the rain pouring down, both teams went in a desperate search of the winner. Clean through, Lee Chung-yong could only shoot straight at Muslera, then Suarez made a hash of a header from Jorge Fucile's cross.

Fortunately for Suarez, he looked far less uncoordinated 10 minutes from time, picking up the ball on the left edge of the box, cutting inside and curling a brilliant shot in off the far post – undoubtedly one of the best of the entire tournament.

South Korea had one last fling when substitute Lee Dong-gook was sent clear with only the keeper to beat, but he could only muster a weak, scuffed effort which Muslera partially blocked. The ball continued to trickle goalward, but Uruguay skipper Diego Lugano had time enough to rush back and clear. Games are won and lost by such tight margins.

Nick Bidwell

> "This was a demonstration of temperament, maturity and class"
>
> *Uruguay coach Oscar Tabarez*

PORT ELIZABETH

URUGUAY 2 (Suarez 8, 80)
SOUTH KOREA 1 (Lee Chung-yong 68)
HT: 1-0. Att: 30,597. Ref: Stark (Ger)

URUGUAY (4-3-3)
Muslera - M Pereira, Lugano, Godin (Victorino 46), Fucile - Arevalo, Perez, A Pereira (Lodeiro 74) - Cavani, Forlan, Suarez (A Fernandez 84).
Booked: none

SOUTH KOREA (4-2-3-1)
Jung Sung-ryong - Cha Du-ri, Cho Yong-hyung, Lee Jung-soo, Lee Young-pyo - Ki Sung-yueng (Yeom Ki-hun 85), Kim Jung-woo - Kim Jae-sung (Lee Dong-gook 61), Park Ji-sung, Lee Chung-yong - Park Chu-young.
Booked: Kim Jung-woo, Cha Du-ri, Cho Yong-hyung.

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Extra-special Ghana are the pride of Africa

Hammer blow...Gyan's shot beats Howard for Ghana's winner

"We have made everybody proud; not Ghana alone, but the whole of Africa"

Ghana striker Asamoah Gyan

JUNE 26

USA 1
GHANA 2
Aet

AFRICA'S World Cup had risked being overwhelmed by failure following the departure of five of its teams before the knockout phase. But Ghana, the continent's sole survivors, gave the African challenge a new lease of life by beating the USA in extra time at the Royal Bafokeng Stadium.

Ghana had failed to score in open play in the group stages, but Kevin-Prince Boateng and Asamoah Gyan remedied that with outstanding individual goals to ensure that the Black Stars became only the third African team to reach a World Cup quarter-final, following in the footsteps of Cameroon in 1990 and Senegal in 2002.

The USA, for all their furious attempts at a comeback, had only themselves to blame. They had conceded early goals against both England and Slovenia, and they did it again against Ghana both in the first half and again in extra time after Landon Donovan's penalty had given them hope of a recovery.

USA coach Bob Bradley acknowledged that his team's attacking capabilities had been found wanting. "When you get to the World Cup level and everything gets challenged at the ultimate level, I think we still know we need to get better," he said. "And going forward would certainly be one of those areas."

However, it was at the other end of the pitch that the USA's fate was sealed. Another lapse in concentration cost the Americans a goal in the fifth minute when Boateng dispossessed Ricardo Clark in the centre of midfield and was allowed to run to the edge of the area, where he unleashed a fierce, low drive inside Tim Howard's near post.

Bradley, who had replaced Clark with Maurice Edu in the 31st minute, made a second change at half-time, taking off striker Robbie Findley and bringing on midfielder Benny Feilhaber. Clint Dempsey moved up front with Jozy Altidore and the USA immediately had more threat in the final third.

Mistimed challenge

The equaliser arrived in the 62nd minute when Dempsey, prompted by Donovan, played the ball through John Mensah's legs on the edge of the area. Jonathan Mensah scurried across to cut out the danger but completely mistimed his challenge, sending Dempsey sprawling. Donovan confidently put the penalty away.

The USA pushed for the winner but – as Bradley acknowledged afterwards – Ghana were well organised by coach Milovan Rajevac. The Serb had made one change to the team that lost 1-0 to Germany in their final Group D match, bringing in a defender, Samuel Inkoom, for a forward, Prince Tagoe.

Inkoom, usually a full-back, was deployed on the right side of an industrious and well-balanced midfield which held its shape as the Americans pushed to exploit their territorial and tactical advantage.

When the USA did create openings, Richard Kingson saved from the deep-running Michael Bradley and Altidore, tussling with John Mensah, stabbed wide.

Just as the USA defence had been exposed at the start of the match, so it was after three minutes of extra time. Jay DeMerit allowed a long punt forward to bounce, and was then left helpless as Gyan chested the ball past him and the Rennes forward gave Howard no chance with a powerful volley.

The USA may have rallied against Slovenia and snatched an injury-time winner against Algeria, but there would be no such late drama, even in front of watching former president Bill Clinton.

"It is a stinging, tough defeat," said Bradley, who was noncommittal over his future. "There is a pretty empty feeling right now because I think coming out of the first round, we felt that there was a chance of doing something bigger."

Gavin Hamilton

● 19.4m saw the game on US TV – a record for a football match

RUSTENBURG

USA 1 (Donovan pen 62)
GHANA 2 (Boateng 5, Gyan 93)
Aet. HT: 0-1. 90mins: 1-1. Att: 34,976. Ref: Kassai (Hun)

USA (4-4-2)
Howard - Cherundolo, DeMerit, Bocanegra, Bornstein - Dempsey, Bradley, Clark (Edu 31), Donovan - Findley (Feilhaber 46), Altidore (Gomez 91).
Booked: Clark, Cherundolo, Bocanegra.

GHANA (4-4-2)
Kingson - Paintsil, John Mensah, Jonathan Mensah, Sarpei (Addy 73) - Inkoom (Muntari 113), Annan, Boateng (Appiah 78), A Ayew - Gyan, Asamoah.
Booked: Jonathan Mensah, A Ayew.

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Disallowed "goal" doesn't hide England's shortcomings

It's a rout...Muller makes it four for Germany

JUNE 27

GERMANY 4
ENGLAND 1

GERMANY reached the quarter-finals (or the equivalent stage) of the World Cup for the 15th successive time since 1954 – a record of consistent achievement that not even Brazil can match. Eventually, it was a comfortable 4-1 victory, and the first time in their World Cup history that England had lost by a three-goal margin.

For the most part the contest was as one-sided as the scoreline indicated. Germany were devastating on the counter-attack and often scythed through a poor England defence with slick and swift passing. Yet the English still left the Free State Stadium feeling cheated because a ball that had clearly crossed the line, from a Frank Lampard shot, was not given as a goal, which would have levelled the scores at 2-2 shortly before half-time.

England manager Fabio Capello and his players were furious with the blunder by the Uruguayan officials, an anger not eased by Germany goalkeeper Manuel Neuer's subsequent admission that he knew the ball had crossed the line when he grabbed it as it bounced back into play.

Capello claimed the result would have been very different had the goal been given. He said the psychological momentum would have been with his team had they recovered from 2-0 down to 2-2. Instead, the England team crumbled meekly in the second half and there could be no doubting that the superior side had triumphed.

Lacklustre display

Former England striker Michael Owen claimed he knew they would lose as soon as he saw the 4-4-2 tactics adopted by Capello. Several senior players, allegedly including Wayne Rooney, preferred 4-3-3 or 4-5-1, but the inflexible manager refused to change his strategy. The subsequent moody and lacklustre display of Rooney was perhaps no coincidence.

It was clear from the start that the more youthful and dynamic German team were smarter and quicker. Ironically, it was a traditionally British long-ball punt that gave them the lead when both John Terry and Matthew Upson misread the flight of Neuer's goal kick and Miroslav Klose nipped in to score. Klose forced another save from England keeper David James before Lukas Podolski put Germany 2-0 ahead after 32 minutes with an angled shot.

England's defence was in disarray, with Upson and Terry run ragged. Upson, however, gave the team hope with a close-range header in the 37th minute from a cross by skipper Steven Gerrard. A minute later came the controversy. Lampard's shot from 20 yards hit the bar and clearly bounced down over the line before being collected by Neuer.

How the officials missed such an easy call was hard to understand. The incident was welcomed by German fans as payback for the famous third England goal in the 1966 World Cup Final; elsewhere it only served to trigger noisy calls for the introduction of technology for goal-line decisions.

If Capello thought the mistake was an excuse to hide behind, England's supporters did not. They knew it was a proper beating from the old enemy, finished off with two scintillating second-half counter-attacks, both converted by young Germany striker Thomas Muller.

"We suffered because of Germany's speed," said Capello afterwards, which made many critics wonder why the England manager had resolutely declined to refresh his ageing team with the vigour of youth. It had been a conscious choice by Capello – along with his 4-4-2 tactics – and they were major blunders by a manager being paid £6million a year for his expertise, twice the annual salary of any other World Cup coach. It didn't seem like value for money to English football.

Jim Holden

> "It is difficult to have so many alpha males and row in the same direction"
>
> *Germany's Bastian Schweinsteiger believes England have too many chiefs and not enough Indians*

BLOEMFONTEIN

GERMANY 4 (Klose 20, Podolski 32, Muller 67, 70)
ENGLAND 1 (Upson 37)
HT: 2-1. Att: 40,510. Ref: Larrionda (Uru)

GERMANY (4-2-3-1)
Neuer - Lahm, Friedrich, Mertesacker, Boateng - Khedira, Schweinsteiger - Muller (Trochowski 72), Ozil (Kiessling 83), Podolski - Klose (Gomez 72).
Booked: Friedrich.

ENGLAND (4-4-2)
James - Johnson (Wright-Phillips 87), Terry, Upson, A Cole - Milner (J Cole 64), Lampard, Barry, Gerrard - Rooney, Defoe (Heskey 71).
Booked: Johnson.

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In the wrong...ref Rosetti waves away Mexican protests over Tevez's opener for Argentina

Wrong decision, but Tevez and co are worth their win

JUNE 27

ARGENTINA 3
MEXICO 1

CARLOS TEVEZ followed in the footsteps of his manager Diego Maradona by scoring a highly controversial first goal, followed by a brilliant individual second, as Argentina overpowered Mexico to set up a quarter-final meeting with Germany.

Just as Maradona had required external assistance with his first goal against England in the 1986 quarter-final before scoring a mesmerising second, so Tevez needed the backing of Italian officials to clear his opening goal amid furious Mexican protests that it was offside. However, his outstanding second, Argentina's third, earned him redemption and a man-of-the-match award.

The two teams had met at the same stage in 2006 in Leipzig and that had proved to be a much closer affair, settled by Maxi Rodriguez's outstanding goal in injury time. Tevez and Lionel Messi had been substitutes for Argentina that day. Four years on, they were the stars of the evening.

Ultimately, Maradona was able to enjoy the 3-1 scoreline, but Argentina's defence was given a much sterner test than in any of the previous three group matches.

Argentina had lined up with a more defensive frame of mind than in the group stages. With Nicolas Otamendi, a centre-back, at right-back rather than the attack-minded Jonas Gutierrez, it was a side which placed a higher priority on defensive solidity.

Powewrful drive

Argentina's defensive set-up did not stop Mexico from peppering the Argentina goal early on. First, Carlos Salcido struck a powerful drive that beat Sergio Romero and crashed back off the crossbar. Then Andres Guardado sent an effort just wide of the far post. Javier Hernandez also fired wide.

There was more of a gap between the Argentinian midfield and the front three of Messi, Tevez and Gonzalo Higuain than in the previous matches and that forced Messi to drop deeper to retrieve the ball. After 12 minutes, he embarked on his first trademark run. Cutting inside from the left flank, he danced through the Mexican midfield, but his chip from the edge of the area was easily held by Oscar Perez.

On 26 minutes, Messi was off again. His intended pass for Tevez was cut out by Perez but Messi lifted the rebound forward to Tevez, a few yards out, whose header helped the ball into the net.

Tevez had clearly been offside, between the goal line and the goalkeeper – a point Mexican players furiously conveyed to Italian referee Roberto Rosetti and his linesman. But the goal stood.

Mexico could have no complaints about Argentina's second in the 33rd minute. Ricardo Osorio was entirely at fault, carelessly knocking a pedestrian pass sideways without looking up to see Higuain advancing towards him. The Argentinian stole in, rounded the keeper and turned the ball into an empty net.

Mexico tried to revive themselves after the break but were felled by a wonder strike from Tevez in the 52nd minute. Just when it looked as if he been stopped in his tracks by two Mexico defenders on the edge of the area, Tevez collected the loose ball, looked up and thundered a shot towards goal that curled inside Perez's left-hand post.

The arrival of Argentina-born striker Guillermo Franco as a substitute sparked a minor Mexican revival and Hernandez pulled a goal back in the 71st minute, Argentina's defence having no answer to his sharp turn in the area and shot past Romero.

Mexico coach Javier Aguirre was at pains to explain his team's departure from the tournament, saying: "We lost our concentration after the offside goal. In the second half we locked horns with Argentina but it was not enough.

"This is a great generation of young Mexican players and in four years' time, they will be up at the top."

For Argentina, the show rolled on.

Gavin Hamilton

> "It's the most honest solution, the fairest and something I had to do"
>
> *Javier Aguirre, who quit as Mexico coach three days after the defeat by Argentina*

JOHANNESBURG (Soccer City)

ARGENTINA 3 (Tevez 26, 52, Higuain 33)
MEXICO 1 (Hernandez 71)
HT: 2-0. Att: 84,377. Ref: Rosetti (Ita)

ARGENTINA (4-3-1-2)
Romero - Otamendi, Demichelis, Burdisso, Heinze - M Rodriguez (Pastore 87), Mascherano, Di Maria (Gutierrez 79) - Messi - Higuain, Tevez (Veron 69).
Booked: none.

MEXICO (4-3-3)
Perez - Juarez, Osorio, Rodriguez, Salcido - Torrado, Marquez, Guardado (Franco 61) - Dos Santos, Hernandez, Bautista (Barrera 46).
Booked: Marquez.

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Holland carry on in a highly efficient manner

Supporting role...the scorer of Holland's second goal, Sneijder, climbs over team-mate Kuyt

JUNE 28

HOLLAND 2
SLOVAKIA 1

A FUNCTIONAL rather than flamboyant Holland eased into the last eight courtesy of a goal apiece from Arjen Robben and Wesley Sneijder.

For all the intuitive playmaking brilliance of Sneijder, the odd flash of Robin Van Persie magic at the point of attack, and the wing craft of Robben, this minimalist *Oranje* performance, cut from the same cloth as their three low-key victories in the group phase, might not have enthralled Total Football purists, but effective it undeniably was, with coach Bert Van Marwijk rightly praising his side after the game for their work ethic, control of possession and denial of space to the opposition.

Thoroughly in keeping with these times of austerity, the Dutch simply made do with the bare minimum and – up against a gritty and physically powerful but generally conservative Slovakia – the Lowlanders could afford to tick over for the most part in second gear.

Only during a brief flurry midway through the second half did the Slovaks show anything like the verve and fearlessness which underpinned their shock 3-2 victory over Italy just four days earlier, and while quick and tricky wide men Miroslav Stoch and Vladimir Weiss had their moments, star midfielder Marek Hamsik will not want to dwell too long on his below-par contribution to his young nation's most important game ever.

Not that any Slovak fans will be feeling short-changed. Qualification for the second round was their sole objective and the scalp of the *Azzurri* will be cherished forever.

Although their game plan did not have risk taking at its heart, Slovakia started brightly nonetheless – with striker Erik Jendrisek firing a fierce left-footer just over, following a typically elusive Weiss run, and Hamsik sending a skidding left-footer a few feet wide from long range.

Cue a rapid Dutch riposte. On the end of a clever Dirk Kuyt cross from the left, Van Persie horribly mistimed his header, but he was soon able to redeem himself, confounding a marker with a lightning quick turn, breaking into the inside-left channel and setting up a goalscoring chance for Sneijder, who could only muster a tame side-footer which Jan Mucha in the Slovak goal collected easily.

The crowd in blustery Durban would be regaled with a far more impressive example of finishing on 18 minutes. Located in space on the right-flank by Sneijder's defence-splitting 60-metre pass, Robben – who was beginning his first game of the tournament after a hamstring injury – latched onto the ball, cut inside across the face of the box and struck a low left-footed shot inside Mucha's near post. A goal of utter simplicity and so ruthlessly executed by Robben.

> "We're proud we made it into the last 16, but the better team is through to the next round"
>
> *Slovakia coach Vladimir Weiss*

Party pieces

Further Dutch chances would come and go in the second period. With the Slovaks apparently unaware of Robben's passion for veering off the right-wing and letting fly with his left foot, another of his party pieces was tipped around the post by the agile Mucha, while *Oranje* centre-back Joris Mathijsen, loitering up front following a corner, was unfortunate to be denied a goal when his point-blank shot hit Mucha full in the face.

In the final quarter of the game, the Slovaks at long last woke up. Cutting in from the left, Stoch had a fierce drive tipped over by Dutch keeper Maarten Stekelenburg and striker Robert Vittek twice wasted good opportunities, hammering one chance straight at Stekelenburg and ballooning the other high over the bar.

Holland effectively put the game to bed following a quickly taken free-kick which was launched forward from the halfway line by Giovanni Van Bronckhorst seven minutes from time. Of the opinion that he was the favourite to gather the ball, Mucha charged off his line to do the necessary, only for Kuyt to beat him to the ball and square it for Sneijder to tap in.

Vittek scored a consolation penalty with the last kick of the game – a consequence of Stekelenburg upending sub Martin Jakubko – but the net result was the same: Holland en route to the quarter-finals, while Slovakia were bound for a warm welcome home in Bratislava.

Nick Bidwell

DURBAN

HOLLAND 2 (Robben 18, Sneijder 84)
SLOVAKIA 1 (Vittek pen 90)
HT: 1-0. Att: 61,962. Ref: Undiano (Spa)

HOLLAND (4-2-3-1)
Stekelenburg - Van der Wiel, Heitinga, Mathijsen, Van Bronckhorst - De Jong, Van Bommel - Robben (Elia 71), Sneijder (Afellay 90), Kuyt - Van Persie (Huntelaar 80).
Booked: Robben, Stekelenburg.

SLOVAKIA (4-1-3-2)
Mucha - Pekarik, Skrtel, Durica, Zabavnik (Jakubko 88) - Kucka - Weiss, Hamsik (Sapara 87), Stoch - Jendrisek (Kopunek 71), Vittek.
Booked: Kucka, Kopunek, Skrtel.

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On their way...Juan (no4) heads Brazil in front

Brazil's power and pace too hot for Chile

JUNE 28

BRAZIL 3
CHILE 0

CHILE coach Marcelo Bielsa, as is his unconventional way, barely looked up as he addressed the media after his team had been comprehensively beaten by Brazil.

"The superiority of Brazil was too much for us," he said. "We were unable to slow them down."

And so Chile, the great entertainers of the 2010 World Cup, departed the tournament. But Bielsa could be proud of his team and his attack-minded tactics.

Until Juan gave Brazil the lead from a corner, Chile had more than matched their illustrious opponents for the first half-hour at Ellis Park. And though Luis Fabiano and Robinho added further goals for Brazil, to Bielsa's credit his side kept on attacking until the end. Brazil were just too strong and could not be struck from their stride.

Brazil had yet to be challenged by a team who enjoyed possession as much as Chile and who attacked with as much forceful intent. However, former midfielder Dunga has fashioned a side in his own rugged image and Brazil were able to resist Chilean advances, while the talent and pace of Kaka, Robinho and Luis Fabiano on the counter-attack did the rest.

Kaka returned to a side that had settled a goalless draw with Portugal in their final group game. With Elano and Felipe Melo injured, Benfica midfielder Ramires started for the first time in the tournament. Dani Alves also kept his place on the right side of midfield. With Maicon behind him, Brazil's right flank promised fireworks.

Meanwhile, Bielsa retained the formation that had so delighted and excited in the group stages. He also introduced Humberto Suazo from the start for the first time in South Africa, though the striker still appeared to be struggling for fitness.

Dominated by Brazil

Aside from a Chile corner in the second minute, the early stages were dominated by Brazil. Gilberto Silva released Luis Fabiano in the 5th minute but the striker pulled his shot across goal. Gilberto Silva then forced Chile keeper Claudio Bravo into a save with a dipping shot from outside the area.

Brazil should have been awarded a penalty when Lucio had his legs taken from under him by Pablo Contreras, but English referee Howard Webb dismissed their appeals.

No matter. Brazil took the lead in the 34th minute when Juan rose unmarked to head home. With Chile focused on Lucio and Luis Fabiano as the corner came in, he was able to direct his header towards goal unchallenged.

Having so far denied Brazil any space in which to pass and move, Chile were now in danger of unravelling.

Luis Fabiano added a second goal in the 38th minute when he finished a sharp Brazilian counter-attack. Robinho had sped off down the left flank and crossed to Kaka, who slipped the ball through to Luis Fabiano.

Moments earlier, the Sevilla striker had been embarrassed when an attempt to backheel the ball had hit his own shin and bounced away, but his touch was more assured this time as he stayed onside, skipped past the challenge of the onrushing Bravo and put the ball in an empty net.

Bielsa's half-time introduction of Jorge Valdivia in place of Mark Gonzalez offered to give Chile's midfield new impetus as they chased the game.

But Brazil bided their time and they struck again in the 59th minute. Ramires, who was enjoying space in midfield as Chile concentrated on containing Brazil's attacking quartet, collected the ball in the centre circle and ran unhindered to the Chile penalty area. In the individual move of the match, he laid the ball off for Robinho, who curled his shot past Bravo and killed off any hopes of a Chilean revival.

Valdivia later saw his dipping volley fly just over and Suazo had a shot pushed round for a corner but, ultimately, Chile had no answer to the pace, power and precision of Brazil.

Gavin Hamilton

> "We gave it everything, we couldn't have done any more. We were just unfortunate to come up against Brazil"
> *Chile captain Claudio Bravo*

JOHANNESBURG (Ellis Park)

BRAZIL 3 (Juan 35, Luis Fabiano 38, Robinho 59)
CHILE 0
HT: 2-0. Att: 54,096. Ref: Webb (Eng)

BRAZIL (4-3-2-1)
Julio Cesar - Maicon, Lucio, Juan, Michel Bastos - Dani Alves, Gilberto Silva, Ramires - Kaka (Kleberson 80), Robinho (Gilberto 85) - Luis Fabiano (Nilmar 76).
Booked: Kaka, Ramires.

CHILE (4-3-3)
Bravo - Isla (Millar 62), Contreras (Tello 46), Jara, Fuentes - Vidal, Carmona, Beausejour - Sanchez, Suazo, Gonzalez (Valdivia 45).
Booked: Vidal, Fuentes, Millar.

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All over...despondent Japan players see Komano miss the decisive penalty

One missed spot-kick sends the Samurai Blue home

JUNE 29

PARAGUAY 0
JAPAN 0
Aet. Paraguay 5-3 on pens

A PENALTY miss by defender Yuichi Komano brought Japan's campaign to a halt and sent Paraguay into the quarter-finals for the first time – ensuring four South American nations in the last eight, also for the first time.

Paraguay coach Gerardo Martino suggested the CONMEBOL quartet had gained an edge thanks to their intense single-league, 10-nation qualifying tournament. Paraguay played 18 games just to reach South Africa, compared with European nations who played around 10 games each. Martino said he thought this instilled a higher level of teamwork among the South Americans than the Europeans.

The outcome of this match was just about right. A largely forgettable game was topped off by an excellent shoot-out contest in which poor Komano was the only man to err, thumping his kick against the top of the crossbar and seeing it ricochet away into the crowd. Oscar Cardozo duly clipped home Paraguay's fifth kick to start celebrations both in Loftus and back in Guayaquil.

His shot concluded not only the first shoot-out of these finals, but also the first in World Cup history not to involve at least one European team.

Paraguay wasted two glaring opportunities around the midway point of the first half. First Lucas Barrios waited too long to shoot after being put through by Roque Santa Cruz and had his shot deflected, then Santa Cruz himself fired wide after Japan failed to clear a corner.

Japan went even closer inbetween when a 30-yard drive from Daisuke Matsui set keeper Justo Villar's crossbar shivering as the ball struck the top of the frame and bounced on out of play.

Matsui caused more trouble shortly before the interval when he raced down the right on the break, only to see Keisuke Honda snatch wastefully at his cross and curl a shot well wide.

The second half saw a lot of hard running without much in the way of end product. Edgar Benitez was too slow to unleash a shot when well placed in the 54th minute and Japan's captain Makoto Hasebe headed narrowly wide from a Yasuhito Endo corner just after the hour.

In the first half of extra time Barrios planted a close-range header on the turn into the hands of keeper Eiji Kawashima, while Tulio Tanaka was wide with a far-post header to a swinging, right-wing free kick from Endo in the second period.

> "This team has done Japan and all Asia proud"
> *Japan coach Takeshi Okada*

Komano duly froze

And so to penalties – though the start was delayed after referee Frank de Bleeckere ordered the waiting Japanese players to remove the jackets they had donned to guard against the chill of the Loftus evening. Thus, when it came to his turn, Komano duly froze.

However, that did not dissuade fans from giving their heroes an enthusiastic welcome when the squad landed at Kansai International Airport, preferring to celebrate victories over Cameroon and Denmark in the group matches rather than dwell on the shoot-out lottery.

"We are back a little earlier than we wanted," said coach Takeshi Okada. "We did want to play at least one more game, but this team did a good job of representing the spirit of Japan."

Okada, whose stated pre-finals target had been a semi-finals place, stepped down after leading Japan to their best-ever World Cup performance on foreign soil.

Keir Radnedge

PRETORIA

PARAGUAY 0
JAPAN 0
Aet. Att: 36,742. Ref: De Bleeckere (Blg)
Paraguay 5-3 on pens

PARAGUAY (4-3-3)
Villar - Bonet, Da Silva, Alcaraz, Morel - Vera, Ortigoza (E Baretto 75), Riveros - Santa Cruz (Cardozo 94), Barrios, Benitez (Haedo Valdez 60).
Booked: Riveros.

JAPAN (4-1-4-1)
Kawashima - Komano, Nakazawa, Tulio Tanaka, Nagatomo - Abe (K Nakamura 81) - Hasebe, Matsui (Okazaki 65), Endo, Okubo (Tamada 106) - Honda.
Booked: Matsui, Nagatomo, Honda, Endo.

Penalty shoot-out:
(Paraguay first)
Baretto 1-0, Endo 1-1; Barrios 2-1, Hasebe 2-2; Riveros 3-2, Komano (missed - hit bar); Haedo Valdez 4-2, Honda 4-3; Cardozo 5-3.

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Villa finishes off cautious Portugal

Clinical...Villa lifts his shot over keeper Eduardo to secure victory

JUNE 29

SPAIN 1
PORTUGAL 0

DAVID VILLA reinforced his reputation as the best finisher in the game with the goal that took Spain into the quarter-finals at the expense of Iberian neighbours Portugal.

Villa's international career has mostly been played out in the shadow of Fernando Torres, yet his undoubted finishing skills have long stood up to scrutiny and he proved the difference on a night when Torres failed to live up to his billing.

Spain, with Xavi as influential as ever and Andres Iniesta returning to peak fitness, dominated possession while Portugal adopted the safety-first tactics of compatriot Jose Mourinho.

Ricardo Costa kept his place at right-back for Portugal after making his first tournament appearance against Brazil, and it was down his flank that Spain's initial success came, with Villa and Torres taking it in turns to drift wide and test keeper Eduardo with fierce curling shots.

Spain were enjoying far more possession with their close-control, short-passing game, but the Portuguese midfield triangle of Tiago, Pepe and Raul Meireles gradually began to snaffle up the space around Spain's chief creative force Xavi. Portugal, meanwhile, were content to play on the counter and Spain keeper Iker Casillas was forced into a double save in the 19th minute, palming away Tiago's shot after the energetic Fabio Coentrao broke from Portugal's half, then standing up to a strong aerial challenge from striker Hugo Almeida on the follow-up.

Ten minutes later Casillas could not hold Cristiano Ronaldo's piledriver, scooping the ball over the advancing Portugal forwards and letting his defenders clear the danger.

Xabi Alonso then shot wide in the 31st minute as Spain struggled to turn their territorial advantage into a goal. But still Portugal enjoyed success on the break, with Hugo Almeida and Tiago heading wide from Raul Meireles and Fabio Coentrao crosses respectively.

The second half followed the same pattern until substitutions changed the course of the game. Spain replaced Torres with target man Fernando Llorente, while Portugal withdrew the tired Hugo Almeida in favour of Danny and switched Cristiano Ronaldo to a central striking role, where he disappeared from the game.

In complete contrast, Villa got the space and opportunity he needed to drive home Spain's advantage.

Llorente's arrival – or rather the departure of Torres – appeared to invigorate Villa, who curled a right-foot shot just wide of Eduardo's left post in the 62nd minute.

A minute later, Spain made the breakthrough when Iniesta played the ball to Xavi on the edge of the area. With his back to goal, Xavi backheeled the ball into the path of Villa on the left hand side of the area and just in line with the last defender. His first shot was pushed away by Eduardo, but he was quickest to the rebound and poked the ball into the net off the bar.

Best form of defence

After the goal, Spain set out to prove that possession was the best form of defence as they began to find their normal passing rhythm. Portugal brought on substitutes Liedson (who was on for Simao) and Pedro Mendes (for Pepe), but they struggled to make an impact as the Portuguese enjoyed limited possession.

Portugal did not deserve to win but they did look unfortunate to lose Ricardo Costa to a red card in the 89th minute after Joan Capdevila fooled Argentinian referee Hector Baldassi into thinking he had been elbowed by the Portuguese defender.

A shameless piece of gamesmanship on a night when David Villa was on top of his game.

Gavin Hamilton

Down and out...Cristiano Ronaldo

"I feel a broken man, completely disconsolate"

Cristiano Ronaldo's World Cup is over

CAPE TOWN

SPAIN 1 (Villa 63)
PORTUGAL 0
HT: 0-0. Att: 62,955. Ref: Baldassi (Arg)

SPAIN (4-2-3-1)
Casillas - Sergio Ramos, Pique, Puyol, Capdevila - Busquets, Xabi Alonso (Marchena 90) - Iniesta, Xavi, Villa (Pedro 88) - Torres (Llorente 58).
Booked: Xabi Alonso.

PORTUGAL (4-3-3)
Eduardo - Ricardo Costa, Ricardo Carvalho, Bruno Alves, Fabio Coentrao - Tiago, Pepe (Pedro Mendes 72), Raul Meireles - Simao (Liedson 72), Hugo Almeida (Danny 58), Cristiano Ronaldo.
Booked: Tiago.
Sent off: Ricardo Costa 89mins.

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Heads we win…Sneijder (second right) steers home Holland's second goal

Sneijder unhinges undisciplined Brazil

JULY 2

HOLLAND 2
BRAZIL 1

A GOAL down at half-time and outclassed in every area of the field, Holland's indomitable class of 2010 rallied superbly to peg back, then overhaul a Brazil side which could not stay true to the two most revered concepts of their coach Dunga: defensive solidity and individual discipline.

The Dutch had looked to all intents and purposes on the way home, yet somehow found the means to pull off a stunning victory thanks to two goals – the second a header – from Wesley Sneijder, at 5ft 7in the smallest player on the pitch.

The unexpected unravelling of Brazil was exemplified by Felipe Melo's red card for an insane stamp on Arjen Robben with 17 minutes to go. And even though the *Selecao* never stopped piling forward in search of parity, the *Oranje* line bent but never broke, holding on for their first World Cup semi-final appearance since 1998.

No doubt aware that his many critics – all 200 million of them – were sharpening their scapegoating knives, Dunga had no choice but to tender his immediate resignation. However, two days later the Brazilian Federation announced that he and his backroom staff had been sacked.

Dunga's decision to sacrifice a large portion of Brazilian flair on the altar of muscle and pragmatism had failed palpably, and all he could offer now was bland dejection. "The intention was always for me to have four years in charge and that time is up," he sighed. "It's sad, it's difficult. Nobody prepares to lose.

"We played well in the first half but we weren't able to maintain the same rhythm and level of concentration in the second. Obviously if you play with only 10 men against a team like Holland that makes it very hard."

"My time is up. It's sad, it's difficult but nobody prepares to lose"

Dunga signals the end of Brazil's hopes and his reign as coach

Seized the initiative

Watching his team call the tune throughout the first 45 minutes, Dunga could not possibly have imagined it would turn out to be the terminus for he and his much vaunted charges. While the Dutch began unusually tentatively, the five-times world champions seized the initiative from the off and deservedly opened the scoring after 10 minutes, Robinho finishing coolly after being sent clear by a long ball from Felipe Melo through the middle.

Holland might claim they had been destabilised by the knee injury suffered in the warm-up by centre-back Joris Mathijsen – necessitating the incorporation of veteran Andre Ooijer – but they had no real excuse for such amateur defending. At the heart of the back four Ooijer and John Heitinga were just too far apart and Robben's attempt to track Robinho's run was half-hearted at best.

On three occasions before half-time Brazil came within a whisker of increasing their lead. Juan scooped the ball over from close range, following good work by Dani Alves, and Kaka's curler from the edge of the box was turned away by Maarten Stekelenburg, who then did extremely well to get a hand to a stinging shot from the overlapping Maicon. In contrast Holland offered precious little threat, no surprise considering main man Robben invariably had a gang of muggers at his heels.

But it was all change on the resumption. With the ever-belligerent Mark Van Bommel driving them on, right-back Gregory Van der Wiel marauding forward and Robben at last finding some freedom, Holland began to establish a foothold and equalised after 53 minutes , albeit a little fortuitously. From a quickly taken free-kick, Sneijder's whipped ball into the box should have been dealt with by Julio Cesar but, stuck in traffic, the keeper could only flail at it helplessly as it skimmed off the scalp of Felipe Melo and into the net.

More Brazil inattention at a set-piece allowed Holland to go in front 15 minutes later, Luis Fabiano allowing Dirk Kuyt to nip in front of him at the near post and flick on a Robben corner for Sneijder to head in.

Their task made all the more problematic by Felipe Melo's red card, Brazil hurled themselves forward with increasing urgency but the best they could come up with was a shot by the generally below par Kaka, which was deflected away by the tenacious Ooijer.

In a stirring finale, Holland had several chances to add a third, particularly when sub Klaas-Jan Huntelaar had time to pick out the unmarked Kuyt or Robin Van Persie but allowed Dani Alves to dispossess him. A rare moment of profligacy from a clinical Dutch side.

Nick Bidwell

PORT ELIZABETH

HOLLAND 2 (Sneijder 53, 68)
BRAZIL 1 (Robinho 10)
HT: 0-1. Att: 40,186. Ref: Nishimura (Jap)

HOLLAND (4-2-3-1)
Stekelenburg - Van der Wiel, Heitinga, Ooijer, Van Bronckhorst - Van Bommel, De Jong - Robben, Sneijder, Kuyt - Van Persie (Huntelaar 85).
Booked: Heitinga, Van der Wiel, De Jong, Ooijer.

BRAZIL (4-2-3-1)
Julio Cesar - Maicon, Lucio, Juan, Michel Bastos (Gilberto 62) - Gilberto Silva, Felipe Melo - Dani Alves, Kaka, Robinho - Luis Fabiano (Nilmar 77).
Booked: Michel Bastos.
Sent off: Felipe Melo (73mins).

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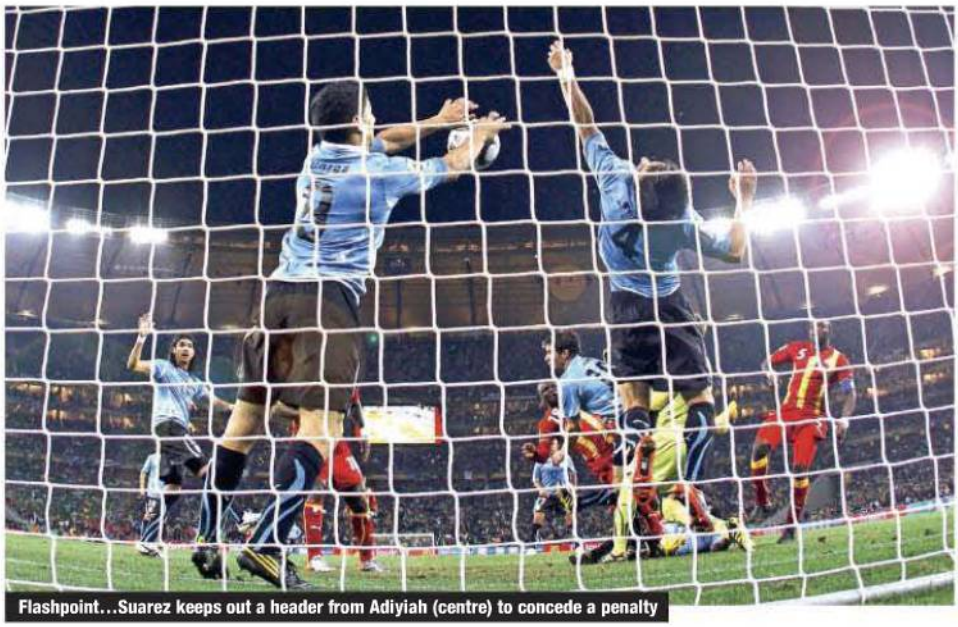
Suarez lends a hand to steal glory from Ghana



Flashpoint...Suarez keeps out a header from Adiyiah (centre) to concede a penalty

> "It was worth being sent off because I had no other choice. When they missed the penalty I thought: 'It is a miracle' "
>
> *Uruguay's Luis Suarez*

JULY 2

URUGUAY 1
GHANA 1
Aet. Uruguay 4-2 on pens

LUIS SUAREZ was both hero and villain after being sent off in the dramatic final seconds of extra time for handling on the line.

A hero for Uruguay for the "instinctive" act that kept his team in the tournament when Asamoah Gyan missed the resulting penalty and sent the match to a shoot-out in which Uruguay triumphed; a villain for the behaviour that ultimately contributed to Ghana's exit and the end of the African dream in 2010.

Suarez, though, was unrepentant about his actions after being carried from the field on the shoulders of his team-mates.

"It was worth being sent off in this way because at that moment there was no other choice," he said. "There was no alternative but for me to do that and when they missed the penalty I thought 'It is a miracle and we are alive in the tournament'."

Punishment for Suarez came in the form of his ban from the semi-final. But his actions had helped to settle a keenly fought and closely contested quarter-final.

Gyan, having struck the bar with the last kick of the match, recovered his poise to convert his spot-kick in the resulting shoot-out. But his team-mates John Mensah and Dominic Adiyiah both hit weak efforts which Uruguay keeper Fernando Muslera saved easily. Substitute Sebastian Abreu scored the winning penalty with an audacious chip down the middle that bamboozled Ghana keeper Richard Kingson.

It was a sad end for Ghana, the youngest team in the tournament, and who had more than matched Uruguay for the 120 minutes.

Influential Muntari

The pace of Suarez and the movement of Diego Forlan troubled Ghana early on but Sulley Muntari, starting a match for the first time in the tournament in place of the suspended Andre Ayew, began to enjoy more influence as the first half progressed.

Muntari, in a more central midfield role, helped win a corner from which Isaac Vorsah rose unmarked only to head wide. But Ghana, emboldened by strong support from the Johannesburg crowd, were sparked into life.

In first-half injury time, Muntari picked up the ball in central midfield. He did not appear to pose an immediate threat to the Uruguay goal but took a second to adjust before firing a dipping shot from 30 yards that caught Muslera napping.

Uruguay were level 10 minutes after the break. Substitute Nicolas Lodeiro was fouled on the left and it seemed too far wide for Forlan to go for goal but his stunning free-kick swerved past the outstretched hand of Kingson. Uruguay were in the ascendency and the uncertain Kingson failed to claim Forlan's cross, but Suarez stabbed his far-post volley into the side netting.

Ghana brought on Stephen Appiah for Samuel Inkoom in a bid to recover midfield authority, while Uruguay turned to Abreu for more physical presence in a three-pronged attack, but neither side could make the breakthrough in normal time.

Space opened up in extra time but the tiring players struggled to make the best use of it. Penalties seemed inevitable but not the dramatic finale we witnessed.

With seconds left an almighty scramble in the Uruguay goalmouth saw Adiyiah's first shot blocked by Suarez, who then punched the same player's follow-up header off the line and was sent off. Glory beckoned for Gyan from the penalty but it was not to be.

And so to the shoot-out. Delight for Abreu and Uruguay, infamy for Suarez, and agony for Ghana and Africa.

Gavin Hamilton

JO'BURG (Soccer City)

URUGUAY 1 (Forlan 55)
GHANA 1 (Muntari 45)
Aet. HT: 0-1. 90 mins: 1-1. Att: 84,017. Ref: Benquerenca (Por)
Uruguay 4-2 on pens

URUGUAY (4-3-3)
Muslera - M Pereira, Victorino, Lugano (Scotti 38), Fucile - Perez, Arevalo, A Fernandez (Lodeiro 46) - Suarez, Forlan, Cavani (Abreu 76).
Booked: Fucile, Arevalo, Perez.
Sent off: Suarez (120mins).

GHANA (4-3-3)
Kingson - Paintsil, John Mensah, Vorsah, Sarpei - Boateng, Annan, Asamoah - Inkoom (Appiah 74), Gyan, Muntari (Adiyiah 88).
Booked: Paintsil, Sarpei, John Mensah.

Penalty shoot-out:
(Uruguay first)
Forlan 1-0, Gyan 1-1; Victorino 2-1, Appiah 2-2; Scotti 3-2, John Mensah (saved) 3-2; M Pereira (missed) 3-2, Adiyiah (saved) 3-2; Abreu 4-2.

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No way through...Lionel Messi runs aground against the impenetrable barrier of Thomas Muller (no 13) and Toni Kroos

Classy Germans leave Diego's dream in ruins

JULY 3

ARGENTINA 0
GERMANY 4

DIEGO MARADONA was close to tears after his team were taken apart by Germany. "This is the hardest thing I've experienced," he said.

His dream of winning the World Cup as player and coach over, Maradona admitted defeat had been much tougher to accept than the day he stopped playing the game. "This was like a punch from Muhammad Ali," he said. "I have no strength for anything."

Yet here was Maradona the manager that many people had expected before the tournament began. When faced by an early setback, Thomas Muller's goal for Germany after just three minutes, he had been unable or unwilling to change his gameplan.

Maradona's tactics had contributed to Germany's first-half dominance; his reluctance to reorganise his side precipitated Argentina's second-half collapse.

The front three of Lionel Messi, Carlos Tevez and Gonzalo Higuain failed to track back. Germany, in contrast, gave a masterclass in team dynamics, defending in numbers and counter-attacking with precision and determination.

Argentina were not just beaten, they were torn apart, ripped to pieces by a young Germany side that made a virtue of its ordinariness. There was nothing revolutionary about their tactics. Joachim Low's side had a simple tactic: heavy pressing all through the team, combined with excellent movement and incisive passing when they had the ball.

"I was not surprised by Argentina's line-up or their game," Low said. "We analysed their game and knew what to expect. We knew Messi would play deeper in the midfield and we managed to take him out of the game. He was always under pressure and we did not foul him or give up many fouls."

Germany's effort in pressing and tracking back released space on the flanks which their full-backs were quick to exploit. Argentina's wide midfielders Angel Di Maria and Maxi Rodriguez found themselves outnumbered.

The warning signs were there for all to see when Bastian Schweinsteiger curled in a free-kick from the left and Muller, moving easily in front of Nicolas Otamendi, glanced the ball in off the foot of an awkward Sergio Romero.

Germany continued to show more menace than Argentina and Mirolsav Klose should have added a second but put his chance over the bar after excellent work by Muller.

Messi showed glimpses of his talent but Germany managed to keep him under wraps. In the last minute of the first half he shot over on one of the rare occasions when he had wriggled free of Schweinsteiger.

Argentina were being overrun in midfield and showing no menace in front of goal. But the two players who might have improved things, midfielder Juan Sebastian Veron and striker Diego Milito, remained on the bench.

Maradona waited until the 70th minute before making any changes to his side. But even then it was to replace right-back Otamendi with Javier Pastore and by then Germany were 2-0 up. By the time Sergio Aguero replaced Di Maria, Germany were three up and cruising. Klose, on his 100th international appearance, scored his second of the match, and his 52nd in all for Germany, in the final minute.

Germany's three second-half goals all followed a familiar pattern. Space on the left flank was exploited, first by Muller and then Lukas Podolski, who raced clear to cross for Klose. Secondly, the outstanding Schweinsteiger danced his way to the byline, where he cut the ball back for Arne Friedrich to scramble the ball home. Finally, Klose volleyed home Mesut Ozil's chipped cross to complete Argentina's humiliation.

With his two goals, Klose took his tally at World Cups to 14, one short of Ronaldo's record – but it was the collective power of Germany that had overwhelmed Argentina.

Gavin Hamilton

> "It was like a punch from Muhammad Ali. I have no strength for anything"
>
> *Diego Maradona contemplates humiliation at the hands of Germany*

CAPE TOWN

ARGENTINA 0
GERMANY 4 (Muller 3, Klose 68, 89, Friedrich 74)
HT: 0-1. Att: 64,100. Ref: Irmatov (Uzb)

ARGENTINA (4-3-1-2)
Romero - Otamendi (Pastore 70), Demichelis, Burdisso, Heinze - M Rodriguez, Mascherano, Di Maria (Aguero 75) - Messi - Tevez, Higuain.
Booked: Otamendi, Mascherano.

GERMANY (4-2-3-1)
Neuer - Lahm, Freidrich, Mertesacker, Boateng (Jansen 72) - Schweinsteiger, Khedira (Kroos 77) - Muller (Trochowski 84), Ozil, Podolski - Klose.
Booked: Muller.

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Villa clinches it as Spain crank up the gears

No stopping him...Villa (no 7) sends Spain into the last four and a meeting with Germany

JULY 3

PARAGUAY 0
SPAIN 1

SO much for the African dream, so much for the Asian upsurge and so much for the great South American revival. Spain's dismissal of eager but raw Paraguay in Ellis Park meant that the semi-finals would see but one "outsider" nation in unlikely Uruguay ranged against a European trio.

Spain, champions of Europe, find themselves tilting at the windmills of history in pursuit of their first world title as no team in the tournament's 80 years have lost their first match and gone on to lift the trophy.

Vicente Del Bosque's men had opened by losing 1-0 to Switzerland, followed that by beating Honduras unimpressively 2-0 then struck a significant spark of form in beating Chile 2-1. Portugal, in the second round, were nailed by a single-goal victory which was less than a steely team effort deserved.

Now, against Paraguay, and despite the end-to-end, missed penalties turbulence of the second half, they showed welcome glimpses of some of their most fluid football. Suddenly here was a team boasting the hallmark of a classic progression through a long, mentally and physically testing tournament – improving, accelerating and evolving from game to game.

The defence had tightened up: Iker Casillas, fragile earlier, produced a magnificent penalty save; Sergio Ramos surpassed Maicon as probably the best right-back on show with Joan Capdevila, on the other flank, vastly underrated; while Gerard Pique and Carles Puyol in the central axis brought the cohesion of their Barcelona club partnership.

In midfield Del Bosque had abandoned his attempt to squash all the talents: Xabi Alonso, Andres Iniesta and Xavi boasted more than sufficient vision to create attacking openings – crucial as it proved – for David Villa.

Slow-burning affair

Ellis Park's final World Cup date was a slow-burning affair which exploded sensationally midway through the second half. Spain had struggled initially to put their game together and their sole dangerous early opening was carved out by the quick thinking of Xavi, who turned nimbly on the ball and fired narrowly over in the 28th minute.

Six minutes later Paraguay manager Gerardo Martino threw his hands to his head in frustration as raiding full-back Claudio Morel was just too late to meet an angled cross from Jonathan Santana. Team-mate Nelson Haedo Valdez even had a "goal" ruled out for offside – wrongly as TV suggested – and fired hastily wide after charging off on a left-wing break as the first-time quarter-finalists grew more daring.

Spain opened the second half as they had the first by taking almost permanent possession of the ball and camping in Paraguay's half, but their unease was reflected in the 56th-minute substitution of the once-more-out-of-sorts Fernando Torres by Cesc Fabregas just before the match exploded in end-to-end drama.

Pique pulled back Oscar Cardozo only for Casillas to stop and hold the Benfica striker's penalty. Spain then raced away and were awarded a contentious penalty of their own when Villa collapsed under a challenge from Antolin Alcaraz. Xabi Alonso put away the first spot-kick but Guatemalan referee Carlos Batres ordered a retake because of encroachment and this time Justo Villar saved.

Spain claimed another penalty in vain as Villar felled Fabregas during a goalmouth scramble. If Batres had been able to see through the forest of bodies he would also have had to show Villar the red card.

Paraguay, in the excitement of the moment, lost their tactical discipline. Villar had to come to the rescue again in superbly defying Iniesta before finally, in the 83rd minute, Spain scored – and this time the goal stood. Villa shot home his fifth of the finals, off Villar's left-hand post, after newly arrived Pedro's shot ricocheted back off the keeper's right-hand upright.

Martino bitterly thanked FIFA "in advance for apologising over the goal we should have had", but his team had been fortunate to finish the match with all 11 men on the pitch and, anyway, Spain's superior class deserved both the twist of fate which spun their way and the victory with it.

Keir Radnedge

> "We didn't play well and we never looked comfortable...the best thing about the game was the result"
>
> *Spain coach Vicente Del Bosque*

JO'BURG (Ellis Park)

PARAGUAY 0
SPAIN 1 (Villa 83)
HT: 0-0. Att: 55,539. Ref: Batres (Gtm)

PARAGUAY (4-4-2)
Villar - Veron, Da Silva, Alcaraz, Morel - E Barreto (Vera 64), Santana, V Caceres (Barrios 84), Riveros - Haedo Valdez (Santa Cruz 72), Cardozo.
Booked: V Caceres, Alcaraz, Morel, Santana.

SPAIN (4-3-3)
Casillas - Sergio Ramos, Pique, Puyol (Marchena 84), Capdevila - Busquets, Xavi, Xabi Alonso (Pedro 75) - Iniesta, Torres (Fabregas 56), Villa.
Booked: Pique, Busquets.

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Dutch master...Robben heads home Holland's third

Late Uruguay rally not enough to stop Dutch

JULY 6

URUGUAY 2
HOLLAND 3

HOLLAND and Uruguay, two small nations weighed down by their respective football histories, played out a goal-laden, incident-packed semi-final in Cape Town.

It was Holland who triumphed, having shown enough attacking ambition in the second half to overcome a Uruguay side who were missing several key players but still rallied for a late, dramatic fightback.

History has taken its toll on the footballing psyche in both countries. Uruguay, the first winners of the World Cup in 1930, were taking part in their first semi-final for 40 years; their position as the pioneering leaders of South American football having long been usurped by Argentina and Brazil.

Meanwhile Dutch football, so often capable of combining entertainment with underachievement at international level, still carries the scars of the mesmerising sides that played in – and should have won – the 1974 and 1978 Finals against West Germany and Argentina respectively.

Yet both teams now stood on the brink of the Final. Much had been made of the South American challenge at this World Cup: of Brazil's strength and Argentina's mastery, of Chile's audacity and Paraguay's defiance. But it was Uruguay who carried the challenge of their continent into the final four.

Their players were determined to enjoy the moment, but Holland assistant coach Frank De Boer remarked afterwards he had noticed the same attitude among the Uruguay players that he experienced in 1998, when Holland lost a semi-final to Brazil.

"In '98, we were happy just to get in the semis and could play Brazil," said De Boer. "I'd knew we'd win when I saw a half dozen of [Uruguay's] players come onto the field with their cameras – and I am talking starting line-up players. They filmed the stadium, filmed the players. Then I knew our approach was much better."

> "I've never in my life been as nervous as I was in the last few minutes, but now I'm bursting with pride"
> *Holland midfielder Rafael Van der Vaart*

If Uruguay were to triumph, they had to show tactical flexibility as well as mental strength. Coach Oscar Tabarez had to reshuffle a team that was without several players, including live-wire striker Luis Suarez, who was suspended for this

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match after his match-saving handball against Ghana, and rugged centre-back Diego Lugano, their leader in defence.

Productive down the flanks

Most worryingly for Uruguay was the inclusion of Martin Caceres at left-back. The Barcelona defender was dutied to mark Arjen Robben and he was beaten as early as the fourth minute in a move that saw Dirk Kuyt blaze Wesley Sneijder's cross over after Robben had turned and beaten Caceres.

Caceres was wobbling, but the left flank looked equally productive and in the 16th minute Robin Van Persie beat left-back Maxi Pereira, only to find himself crowded out as he advanced into the area.

Two minutes later Holland took the lead. A patient build-up may have benefitted from Marc Van Bommel's forceful but unpunished challenge, but Giovanni Van Bronckhorst, moving into space on the left, saw his opportunity and thundered an extraordinary shot towards the Uruguay goal that flew past Fernando Muslera and into the top corner.

Holland had deployed Demy De Zeeuw in place of suspended midfielder Nigel De Jong and their pattern of play in the first half was similar to that of previous games. De Zeeuw and the forceful Van Bommel worked hard to retrieve the ball when they lost possession but they found it hard to create opportunities against a Uruguay side set up to press and cajole. That approach, though, left Diego Forlan and Edinson Cavani isolated in attack.

Uruguay were not afraid to get physical and Caceres was booked for a head-high challenge on De Zeeuw before redeeming himself with a last-ditch tackle after Robben had burst into the area.

Holland, though, had reckoned without Forlan and the swerve he manages to impart on the Jabulani ball. Just as he had scored from distance against Ghana with a shot that swerved and deceived the opposition keeper, so he struck again in the 41st minute.

This time, he was in a more central position, but he hit the ball with the same vicious curl and its swerve deceived Maarten Stekelenburg, who flapped a hand at the ball as it flew past him and into the net.

Half-time brought a significant change for Holland with Rafael Van der Vaart replacing De Zeeuw. His arrival brought more poise to the Dutch midfield as well as much needed attacking verve. Any doubts that Holland might lose some of their bite were dispelled as Van Bommel continued to exert a considerable physical presence.

Holland soon began to cut through Uruguay's midfield, but Robben shot wastefully over after Muslera had saved from Van der Vaart. Instead, it was Sneijder who made the breakthrough for Holland.

In the 70th minute, the Internazionale midfielder picked up the ball on the left-hand edge of the area. He cut inside his marker and curled a shot to the far post. The ball took a deflection off a Uruguay defender and Muslera was possibly unsighted by Van Persie, who was technically in an offside position as the ball passed through his legs, but the goal stood.

Any doubts about the legitimacy of Sneijder's goal proved academic three minutes later when Robben rose to head Kuyt's cross into the net after a sweeping Dutch move.

Holland, having taken a pragmatic approach throughout the tournament, had at last paid more than just lip service to their attacking traditions. The arrival of Van der Vaart, and the attacking ambition that he brought, had turned the game in their favour.

But just as Dutch thoughts began to turn to Johannesburg and a first World Cup Final appearance for 32 years, Uruguay, true to their traditions launched a spirited comeback.

Mouthful...Caceres' boot catches De Zeeuw

Leader...Holland's Van Bronckhorst

Had Forlan not left the pitch in the 84th minute, Uruguay may have found a way through the desperate Dutch defending that followed Maxi Pereira's goal in injury time.

But Holland clung on and Uruguay's dream of reaching another World Cup Final, 60 years after their last appearance, was over.

"It was a match worthy of the World Cup semi-finals," said Tabarez. "I'm proud of my players. We're disappointed, but we've shown everyone who wrote us off beforehand that we're not very far off the top.

"We gave it our best shot, but it wasn't quite enough. They reacted well to going a goal down, they fought back and equalised, and they battled right to the end. I can't ask for more than that, nor can the players, and nor can our country. It's the right result and we accept it. If I had the option of choosing how to lose a match, it would be pretty close to what happened today."

For Holland, and their many thousands of orange-clad fans, Johannesburg beckoned – and a date with the demons of history.

Gavin Hamilton

CAPE TOWN

URUGUAY 2 (Forlan 41, M Pereira 90)
HOLLAND 3 (Van Bronckhorst 18, Sneijder 70, Robben 73)
HT: 1-1. Att: 62,479. Ref: Irmatov (Uzb)

URUGUAY (4-4-2)
Muslera - M Pereira, Victorino, Godin, Caceres - Perez, Arevalo, Gargano, A Pereira (Abreu 78) - Forlan (S Fernandez 84), Cavani.
Booked: M Pereira, Caceres.

HOLLAND (4-2-3-1)
Stekelenburg - Boulahrouz, Heitinga, Mathijsen, Van Bronckhorst - Van Bommel, De Zeeuw (Van der Vaart 46) - Robben (Elia 89), Sneijder, Kuyt - Van Persie.
Booked: Sneijder, Boulahrouz, Van Bommel.

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Puyol heads Spain into their first-ever World

JULY 7

GERMANY 0
SPAIN 1

GERMANY had been hailed as one of the most exciting teams in the tournament after their youthful approach had blown away two fancied sides, England and Argentina.

In those games, Germany had been masters of the midfield, out-thinking England and outnumbering Argentina. The four goals scored by Germany in each of those games was proof of their positive, refreshing approach.

Yet against Spain in this all-European semi-final, Joachim Low's young guns came up against a completely different team. European champions Spain pressed Germany brilliantly, denying them the space that they so ruthlessly exploited against England and Argentina.

It was a simple Spanish gameplan, brilliantly orchestrated by Xavi and enthusiastically executed by his team-mates, notably fellow midfielders Sergio Busquets and Andres Iniesta.

At times the short-tempo, hard-pressing game left striker David Villa isolated. But, just as with their previous meeting in the Final of Euro 2008, Spain showed that one opportunity was all that was needed to demonstrate their superiority. The only difference in this game was that it came from a set-piece: a 73rd-minute corner from Xavi from which Carles Puyol buried his header in the Germany net.

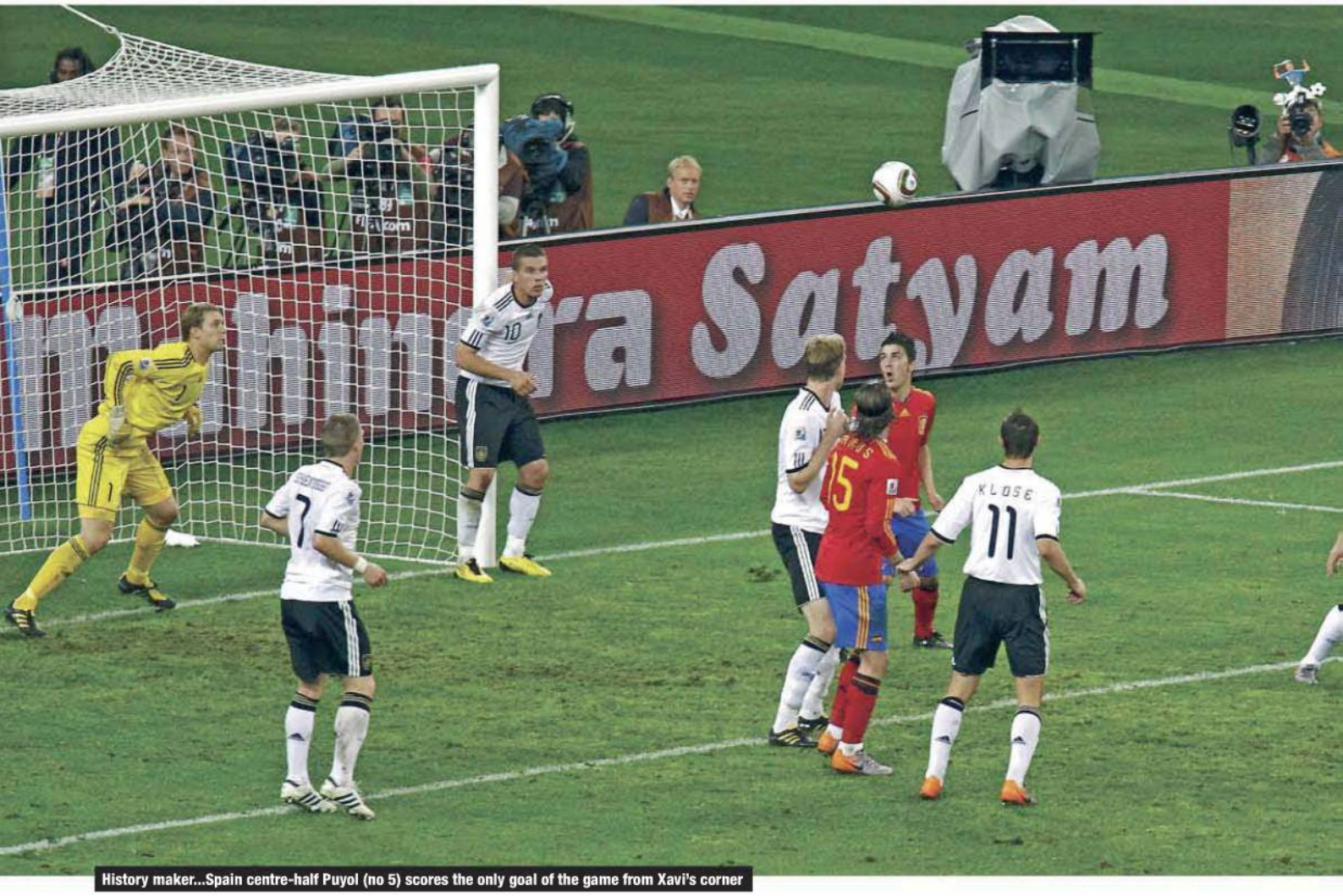
Spain had been emboldened by the only change made by coach Vicente Del Bosque. Having lost patience with the out-of-sorts Fernando Torres, the coach turned to Pedro, who brought some much-needed dynamism to Spain's front play.

> "Spain deserved to win this match, absolutely. They are the best team in the world"
> *Germany coach Joachim Low*

In contrast, Germany opted for Piotr Trochowski – a more conventional wide midfielder – to replace the suspended Thomas Muller, rather than the much-touted central playmaker Toni Kroos.

The unfortunate Muller had given Germany more movement in the channels between midfield and attack, but with the less mobile Trochowski, Germany were more static. In addition, the Spanish pressing game forced the previously forward-thinking Lukas Podolski into more defensive duties. So, in stark contrast to their previous entertaining 4-2-3-1, Germany adopted a more rigid 4-4-1-1, with Mesut Ozil slotting in behind striker Miroslav Klose.

Germany's midfield were preoccupied



History maker...Spain centre-half Puyol (no 5) scores the only goal of the game from Xavi's corner

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Cup Final

Committed...Sergio Ramos and Podolski

with trying to cope with Spain's passing game, but when they did break out they were capable of causing Spain difficult moments.

In the 15th minute Iker Casillas looked uncomfortable tipping away a corner but he was more in control when he turned Trochowski's shot around a post in the 32nd minute.

On the half-hour mark Xabi Alonso shot wide when in a good position on the edge of the penalty area as Spain continued to enjoy possession but little penetration.

But Spain appeared to have luck on their side. Germany created the best opening of the first half when Klose dropped deep and Ozil ran from deep. The covering defender Sergio Ramos clipped Ozil's leg just outside the area but the Hungarian referee, Viktor Kassai, refused to accede to German protests and waved play on. A red card for Ramos would not have been unfair, but it would have altered the balance of the game.

Dominated possession

The second half began with a similar pattern as the Spanish dominated possession while pressing and probing for an opportunity. Xabi Alonso twice shot wide from outside the area before Spain finally played their way through the defence in the 58th minute.

Neuer did well to save Pedro's strong shot from the edge of the area, but before Germany could clear Xavi had backheeled the ball into the path of the onrushing Iniesta, who flashed a shot across the box but Villa just failed to make the connection.

Kroos replaced Trochowski on the hour mark and he played a part in Germany's best move. As with their previous games, it came down the left flank, where Podolski was released and crossed to the far post for the unmarked Kroos, whose sidefoot shot was pushed away by Casillas.

But just with their previous games, Spain only needed one chance to shade the game. And after all the neat approach play, it came – irony of ironies – from a set-piece. In the 73rd minute Puyol rose unmarked behind his Barcelona team-mate Gerard Pique to head Xavi's corner past Neuer. Pique was being marked by Sami Khedira, whose midfield policing work had been immaculate, but he could do absolutely nothing to stop the late arrival of Puyol.

After the goal, Spain proved again that possession can be the best form of defence.

Pedro should have set up a second goal for Spain as Germany pursued the equaliser. With space opening up, he was sent clear but he tried to beat Arne Friedrich on his own, with substitute Torres unmarked on the other side of the area and begging for the ball.

One goal was enough for Spain's brilliant generation of players to reach their first World Cup Final, just over two years on from their European triumph in Vienna and only 21 days after their opening defeat by Switzerland, also in Durban.

"Our players carried out their job in a magnificent way," said Del Bosque. "We can say that Germany weren't as good as we'd expected, but that's thanks to the excellent work of our team. We were better than them in the overall count and we played the way we like to play.

"Today we weren't pressured as much as we were against Paraguay and Chile. If we're comfortable with the ball, we don't suffer."

For Germany, their assault on the Final was over, and Low conceded: "The Spanish can win any game because they are dominant and it's hard to contain their attack."

To be fair to Low, Germany had not been outclassed. They simply could not cope with the brilliant simplicity of Spain's gameplan – and the outstanding players who carried it out to perfection.

Gavin Hamilton

DURBAN

GERMANY 0
SPAIN 1 (Puyol 73)
HT: 0-1. Att: 60,960. Ref: Kassai (Hun)

GERMANY (4-4-1-1)
Neuer - Lahm, Mertesacker, Friedrich, Boateng (Jansen 52) - Trochowski (Kroos 62), Schweinsteiger, Khedira (Gomez 81), Podolski - Ozil - Klose.
Booked: none.

SPAIN (4-2-3-1)
Casillas - Sergio Ramos, Pique, Puyol, Capdevila - Busquets, Xabi Alonso (Marchena 90) - Iniesta, Xavi, Pedro (David Silva 86) - Villa (Torres 81).
Booked: none.

New...Pedro (right) and Trochowski

Going home...(left to right) Friedrich, Per Mertesacker and Marcell Jansen

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THE ULTIMATE GLOBAL NEWS AND RESULTS SECTION

Back home

USA World Cup star Landon Donovan celebrates with team-mates Alan Gordon and Chris Klein (left) as Los Angeles Galaxy beat Seattle Sounders in his first game since returning to MLS from South Africa. More information page 91.

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SQUADS

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BOTSWANA

Historic victory

Jerome Ramatlhakwane's first-half goal gave Botswana a shock 1-0 win away to Tunisia in their opening African Nations Cup Group K qualifier.

"This is a historic victory against an opponent regarded as one of the giants on the continent," said Botswana coach Stanley Tsoshane.

ETHIOPIA

Iffy appointment

Former Swindon Town coach Iffy Onuora has agreed a one-year deal as head coach of the Ethiopia national team.

MOROCCO

Atlas Lions' new boss

Eric Gerets has been named as Morocco's new national coach. The Belgian will leave his current position in charge of Saudi club Al Hilal in November at the latest, after the AFC Champions League.

PERU

New man Markarian

Uruguayan coach Sergio Markarian has taken charge of the Peru national team. He had resigned as coach of Universidad de Chile after winning the 2009 apertura.

TOGO

Return to action

Playing for the first time since a fatal terror attack on their team bus before the 2010 African Nations Cup in Angola in January, Togo twice came from behind to draw 2-2 away to Chad.

Leger Djime and Marius Mbaiyam scored for the home side, Sapol Mani and Backer Alouenouvo replying for Togo.

Shock...Botswana's Patrick Motsepe (right)

RESULTS

AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALIFIERS

Group K

July 1 - N'Djamena
Chad 2 (Leger 21, Marius 27)
Togo 2 (Sapol 23, Alouenovo 67)
HT: 2-1. **Ref:** Benouza (Alg)
Chad: Koulara - Asselme, Ezeckiel, Aladjim, Karl Max, Hilaire, Allarassem, Leger, Macrada, Kerim, Marius.
Togo: Tchagouni - Gafar, Nibombe, Akakpo, Assimiou, Sapol, Brenner (Bossou 89), Ahodikpe (Alouenovo 50), Senaya, M Salifou (Eninful 30), Abraw.

July 1 - Tunis
Tunisia 0
Botswana 1 (Ramatlhakwane 35)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Diatta (Sen)
Tunisia: Mathlouthi - Ifa, Haggui, Felhi, Meriah, Korbi, Ragued, Darragi (Ben Yahia 46), Msakni (Chikhaoui 74), Ben Khalfallah, Jemaa (Allagui 84).
Botswana: Marumo - Thuma, Letsholathebe, Ramoshibidu, Nato, Lenyeletse, Motsepe, Selolwane, Ramatlhakwane, Mokgathi, Ngele.

AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALIFIERS – GROUP K

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Botswana	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Chad	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Togo	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Malawi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunisia	1	0	0	1	0	1	0

01.07.10 Chad v Togo..... 2-2
01.07.10 Tunisia v Botswana..... 0-1
09.07.10 Botswana v Chad
09.07.10 Togo v Malawi
11.08.10 Chad v Tunisia
11.08.10 Malawi v Botswana
04.09.10 Botswana v Togo
04.09.10 Tunisia v Malawi
09.10.10 Malawi v Chad
09.10.10 Togo v Tunisia
17.11.10 Botswana v Tunisia
17.11.10 Togo v Chad
26.03.11 Chad v Botswana
26.03.11 Malawi v Togo
04.06.11 Botswana v Malawi
04.06.11 Tunisia v Chad
03.09.11 Malawi v Tunisia
03.09.11 Togo v Botswana
08.10.11 Chad v Malawi
08.10.11 Tunisia v Togo

Group A
Cape Verde
Liberia
Mali
Zimbabwe

Group B
Ethiopia
Guinea
Madagascar
Nigeria

Group C
Comoros
Libya
Mozambique
Zambia

Group D
Algeria
Central African Republic
Morocco
Tanzania

Group E
Cameroon
Democratic Republic of Congo
Mauritius
Senegal

Group F
Burkina Faso
Gambia
Mauritania
Namibia

Group G
Egypt
Niger
Sierra Leone
South Africa

Group H
Benin
Burundi
Ivory Coast
Rwanda

Group I
Congo
Ghana
Sudan
Swaziland

Group J
Angola
Guinea-Bissau
Kenya
Uganda

Group A-J matchdays:
2010 - September 4, October 9;
2011 - March 26, June 4, September 3, October 8

The group winners and the three runners-up with the best record will qualify for the 2012 finals, to which co-hosts Equatorial Guinea and Gabon qualify automatically

BALTIC CUP

In Kaunas, Lithuania

June 18
Lithuania 0
Latvia 0
Att: 1,000. **Ref:** Kaasik (Est)
Lithuania: Arlauskis - Klimavicius, Dedura, Kijanskas, Radavicius, Ivaskevicius (Kavaliauskas 70), Galkevicius, Savenas (Luksa 46), Mikoliunas, D Cesnauskis (Poskus 62), Sernas (Rimkevicius 72).
Latvia: Kolinko - Klava, Ivanovs, Mihadjuks, Krjauklis, Astafjevs, Rafalskis, Solonicins, Pereplotkins (Rakels 75), Grebis, Malasenoks (Zigajevs 64).

June 19
Estonia 0
Latvia 0
Att: 300. **Ref:** Mazeika (Lit)
Estonia: Kotenko - Sisov, Stepanov, Piiroja, Kruglov, Kams (Mosnikov 73), Vassiljev, Dmitrijev, S Puri (E Puri 78), Saag (Dupikov 65), Post (Konsa 65).
Latvia: Kolinko - Klava, Mihadjuks, Laizans (Lazdins 65), Ivanovs, Krjauklis, Pereplotkins (Karasausks 65), Zigajevs (Astafjevs 90), Rakels (Solonicins 56), Rafalskis, Grebis.

June 20
Lithuania 2 (Savenas pen 31, Rimkevicius 90+2)
Estonia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 600. **Ref:** Sipailo (Lat)
Lithuania: Grybauskas - Klimavicius, Dedura (Zelmikas 64), Kijanskas, Radavicius, Ivaskevicius, Galkevicius (Arlauskas 80), Savenas (Beniusis 81), Luksa (Kavaliauskas 77), D Cesnauskis, Sernas (Rimkevicius 71).
Estonia: Aksalu (Londak 46) - Palatu, Barengrub, Piiroja, Teniste, Dmitrijev, Vassiljev (Kruglov 67), Mosnikov (Kams 58), Post (Saag 68), Dupikov (S Puri 58), Konsa.

BALTIC CUP – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lithuania	2	1	1	0	2	0	4
Latvia	2	0	2	0	0	0	2
Estonia	2	0	1	1	0	2	1

FRIENDLIES

Tuesday, June 8

June 8 - Johannesburg
Mozambique 0
Portugal 3 (Danny 53, Hugo Almeida 75, 83)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Dyer (SAf)
Mozambique: Lama - Campira (Zainadine Junior 85), Mexer, Fanuel, Paito, Hagi (Jumisse 70), Simao, Genito (Josemar 78), Jerry (Tony 88), Fumo (Armando Sa 60), Domingues.
Portugal: Eduardo - Miguel, Bruno Alves, Ricardo Carvalho, Fabio Coentrao, Pedro Mendes (Pepe 77), Raul Meireles (Miguel Veloso 60), Danny (Duda 86), Deco (Tiago 61), Simao (Cristiano Ronaldo 63), Liedson (Hugo Almeida 46).

June 8 - Murcia
Spain 6 (Villa 12, Silva 14, Xabi Alonso 51, Fabregas 57, Fernando Torres 75, Pedro 80)
Poland 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 31,179. **Ref:** Koukoulakis (Gre)
Spain: Casillas - Arbeloa (Sergio Ramos 55), Puyol (Marchena 72), Pique, Capdevila, Xabi Alonso, Busquets, Xavi (Fabregas 55), Silva (Jesus Navas 55), Villa (Fernando Torres 66), Iniesta (Pedro 39).
Poland: Kuszczak - Wojtkowiak, Zewlakow, Glik (Sadlok 52), Dudka, Blaszczykowski (Cetnarski 86), Mierzejewski (Matuszczyk 46), Murawski, Peszko (Jodlowiec 78), Nowak (Rybus 46), R Lewandowski (Sobiech 76).

Wednesday, June 9

**June 9 - Nelspruit, South Africa*
Chile 2 (Fierro 68, Paredes 72)
New Zealand 0
Ref: Bennett (SAf)
**'Training' game, played in three 'halves' of 30 minutes each*
Chile: Bravo (Marin 61) - Isla (Tello 61), Medel (Contreras 31), Jara, Vidal (Casanueva 84), Carmona (Fuentes 31), Tello (Estrada 31), M Fernandez (Ross 84), Sanchez (Orellana 31), Paredes (Gutierrez 84), Beausejour (Fierro 31).
New Zealand: Paston (Bannatyne 61) - Sigmund, Lochhead (Boyens 74), Reid (McGlinchey 43), Vicelich, Elliott (Christie 31), Killen (Mulligan 61), Bertos (Barron 77), Fallon (Smeltz 31), Smith, Brockie (Wood 47).

Thursday, June 10

**June 10 - George, South Africa*
Zimbabwe 0
Japan 0
**'Training' game, played in three 'halves' of 30 minutes each*

Saturday, June 19

June 19 - Niamey
Niger 1 (Kowa 90)
Chad 1 (Karl Max 44)
HT: 0-1

June 19 - Saipan
Northern Mariana Islands 1 (Miller 68)
Guam 1 (Cunliffe 89)
HT: 0-0

Sunday, June 20

June 20 - Khartoum
Sudan 2 (Taieb pen 60, Othman 83)
Tunisia 6 (Ben Yahia 9, Allagui 37, Haggui pen 48, Jemaa 55, 58, Akaichi 70)
HT: 0-2
Tunisia: Balbouli (Kasraoui) - Ifa (Boussaidi), Haggui (Abdennour), Felhi (Hammami), Meriah, Bergaoui, Ben Yahia, Marzouki, Allagui, Jemaa (Akaichi), Dhaouadi (Mouihbi).

Saturday, June 26

June 26 - Kunming
China 4 (Yan Xiangchuang 10, Yu Hanchao 47, 78, Qu Bo 62)
Tajikistan 0
HT: 1-0
China: Yang Zhi (Zeng Cheng 46) - Rong Hao, Wang Qiang, Zhao Peng, Zhang Linpeng, Yang Hao, Liu Jian (He Yang 36), Yu Hai (Yu Hanchao 46), Deng Zhuoxiang (Zhu Ting 76), Yan Xiangchuang (Qu Bo 46), Gao Lin (Yang Xu 46).

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PEOPLE in the news

Allegri is the new man in Milan

Big challenge...Allegri has swapped Cagliari for Milan

EUROPE

● Milan have appointed MASSIMILIANO ALLEGRI as their new coach until 2012, with the 42-year-old filling the void left by LEONARDO's departure at the end of last season. The former Cagliari boss is the first Milan coach not to have played for the club since FATIH TERIM's brief tenure in 2001. PIERPAOLO BISOLI, who led Cesena from the Italian third division to Serie A in two seasons, has taken charge of Cagliari.

● Spain striker DAVID SILVA has agreed to join Manchester City from Valencia. The 24-year-old said: "I believe the Premier League is one of the best competitions in the world and I want to bring success to City and win trophies."

● Liverpool appointed ROY HODGSON as manager after RAFA BENITEZ left to join Champions League winners Internazionale. Hodgson, who has managed Inter himself in the past, took Fulham to the Final of the Europa League last season.

● Real Madrid have agreed to sign Argentina winger ANGEL DI MARIA from Benfica. The 22-year-old helped the Portuguese side to a league and League Cup double last season.

● Germany captain MICHAEL BALLACK, who missed the World Cup through injury, returned to his former club Bayer Leverkusen after leaving Chelsea. The 33-year-old spent four years playing in the Premier League.

● SANDRO ROSELL replaced JOAN LAPORTA is the new president of Barcelona after securing 61 per cent of the vote during the Spanish club's presidential election.

Barca boss...Rosell

New boy...Quaresma

● Besiktas have signed Internazionale winger RICARDO QUARESMA for £6million. The 26-year-old, who was omitted from Portugal's World Cup squad this summer, becomes BERND SCHUSTER's first signing since taking over from MUSTAFA DENIZLI, who stood down for health reasons.

● Fiorentina striker ADRIAN MUTU lost his appeal after a five-year legal battle and must pay his former club Chelsea £14million in damages for a breach of his contract. The Romanian was sacked in 2004 after he tested positive for cocaine and the English club sued him to recover the transfer fee they paid for him.

● Reigning Dutch league champions Twente signed prolific Austria striker MARC JANKO from Salzburg to replace BLAISE NKUFO, who moved to the USA and joined Seattle Sounders after playing for Switzerland at the World Cup.

● Former Real Madrid boss LOPEZ CARO has taken charge of Romanain club Vaslui. The Spain Under-21 coach replaces MARIUS LACATUS, who led Vaslui to a best-ever third place last term before deciding to move abroad with his family.

● Genoa signed Italy striker LUCA TONI after he was released from his contract by Bayern Munich. The 33-year-old, who was part of the 2006 World Cup-winning side, failed to impress on loan at Roma and did not make his country's squad for South Africa.

● Steaua Bucharest, who have now gone four years without a trophy, appointed former Romania national team boss VICTOR PITURCA as their new coach.

● Former Stuttgart and Cameroon coach WINFRIED SCHAFER has joined FK Baku. The 60-year-old German, most recently in charge of UAE side Al Ain FC, becomes the Azerbaijani Cup winners' fourth coach in the last nine months.

● Manchester United winger ZORAN TOSIC, who spent the latter half of last season on loan to Koln, has joined CSKA Moscow.

● DIMITRIS SALPIGIDIS – who scored Greece's first-ever goal at the World Cup finals, their opener in the 2-1 win against Nigeria – has returned to former club PAOK from Panathinaikos on a four-year contract.

● Former Israel national coach DROR KASHTAN has returned to club management, taking charge of Bnei Yehuda Tel-Aviv. With six Israeli titles and six State Cups to his name, the 64-year-old is the most decorated coach in the country's history.

● Former Finland striker MIXU PAATELAINEN is the new manager of Scottish club Kilmarnock. The 43-year-old replaced JIMMY CALDERWOOD, who left at the end of the season.

SOUTH AMERICA

● LUIZ FELIPE SCOLARI has returned to Palmeiras for a second spell as coach. The 61-year-old, who guided the Brazilian club to the Libertadores Cup in 1999 and won the World Cup with the national team in 2002, left Uzbek club Bunyodkor by mutual consent in May.

Back home...Scolari

● Argentina striker MAURO BOSELLI left Estudiantes for English club Wigan Athletic. The 25-year-old cost the English club a reported £6million and has signed a four-year contract.

AFRICA

● Nigeria defender UWA ECHIEJILE has been signed by Portuguese league runners-up Sporting Braga from French club Rennes as they prepare for their first-ever Champions League campaign.

● Hungarian BERTALAN BICSKEI is the new national coach of Liberia.

CONCACAF

● France striker THIERRY HENRY, who was released by Barcelona after the World Cup, is expected to move to America and join a club in MLS. The 32-year-old only started 15 league games for Barca last term.

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ARGENTINA Another new champion

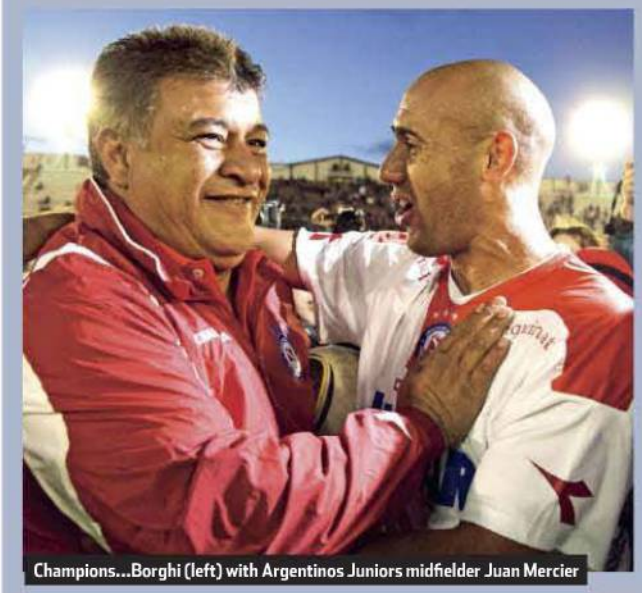
Hit man...Estudiantes' Mauro Boselli was the clausura's top scorer

PLAYER OF THE SEASON
JUAN ROMAN RIQUELME
(Boca Juniors)
Boca's 32-year-old playmaker was as influential as ever.

COACH OF THE SEASON
CLAUDIO BORGHI
(Argentinos Juniors)
Turned a team of rejects and unknowns into title winners.

NEWCOMER OF THE SEASON
DANIEL VILLALBA
(River Plate)
The teenage striker became a first-team regular and made his mark in a struggling side.

Veteran...Riquelme


Champions...Borghi (left) with Argentinos Juniors midfielder Juan Mercier

ARGENTINA'S intense domestic rivalry was evident once more in the closing tournament as Argentinos Juniors became the eighth team to win the title in the last eight competitions. But the clausura also demonstrated yet again that Argentinian clubs – despite having big playing staffs that they often cannot pay – cannot compete in league and cup tournaments at the same time.

Estudiantes, Velez Sarsfield, Banfield and Lanus played some of the best football, but they often fielded below-strength teams in the league in order to rest players for Libertadores Cup games. As a result, all fell between two stools, winning neither competition.

Neither River Plate nor Boca Juniors had the distraction of the Libertadores to contend with, but they both had miserable seasons. River suffered because their committee until the end of last year stripped the club of assets in every way, while at Boca they keep making mistakes in buying and selling players and could not fix an internal player division. However, this should by no means be taken as a reason why a modest club like Argentinos Juniors, with a smaller squad, won the title.

Argentinos Juniors have always been associated with good football and creating stars who they then have to sell to keep going. Among the many famous internationals who started out there are Diego Maradona, Fernando Redondo, Juan Roman Riquelme, Esteban Cambiasso, Sergio Batista, Juan Pablo Sorin and Claudio Borghi – who came back to coach the club in June 2009.

Borghi used the 3-4-1-2 line-up with which he had taken Chile's Colo Colo to four successive championships before returning to Argentina. This often changed to 3-4-3, but he always stuck with three defenders – a tactic which other clubs rarely risked – and a full out attack that attempted to keep the ball in the opposition's half for as long as possible. Borghi's side were the league's top scorers with 35 goals and only lost two games.

> Argentinos Juniors have always been associated with good football and creating stars who they have to sell to keep going

With little cash available, Borghi had to make do with several rejects from other clubs, notably striker Ismael Sosa, their leading scorer with nine goals, and Jose Luis Calderon, the oldest player in the league at 39 whose contract had not been renewed by Estudiantes. He was about to retire when Borghi convinced him to join Argentinos, where he was no longer a goalscoring striker but became an on-field organiser. The midfield pairing of Nestor Ortigoza and Juan Mercier was also extremely important.

After a poor start in which they took six points from their first six games, Argentinos finally clicked and took 35 points from the final 16 games. But Borghi, who was part of the Argentinos side which won the league and Libertadores Cup in 1985, says that side was better than the present one.

Title winners, especially smaller clubs, can never keep their team together and Borghi, who was in Argentina's 1986 World Cup-winning squad but only played one game, said some time ago that if Argentinos won the title he would leave, having repaid the club what they did for him as a youth. And that's exactly what he has done, moving to Boca Juniors and taking defender Matias Caruzzo with him. Argentinos will also lose Sosa who had been on loan from Independiente.

Estudiantes' title hopes disappeared in their last match of the season when they drew 0-0 with relegated Rosario Central after having their midfield general Juan Sebastian Veron sent off. Their striker Mauro Boselli was the league's top scorer with

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13 goals and he has now moved to England and joined Wigan Athletic.

Independiente, who led the table until a few weeks before the end, never looked like champions and coach Americo Gallego deserves a lot of credit for keeping his modest team on top for so long. However, his contract was not renewed and Independiente became the 10th of the 20 top-flight clubs to change their coach during the closing championship. Gallego had asked for several experienced reinforcements for next season and the club, in a poor financial state, preferred to promote players from their junior ranks.

A late surge by Racing Club enabled them to escape the relegation play-off to which they had been condemned in the previous two seasons. Their survival showed up the unfairness of teams fielding weak sides as two of Racing's vital victories came against the reserve teams of Velez Sarsfield and Banfield. Racing escaped at the expense of Rosario Central who went down.

For once the bottom two, Chacarita Juniors and Atletico Tucuman, were also relegated, but the unfair system of average points over the last three seasons often sends down teams far higher up in the table.

River Plate improved slightly in the last few weeks after Angel Cappa took over as coach, but next season they start at the bottom of the relegation table. Perhaps the lack of funds will make them and Boca Juniors look at their good junior divisions: Boca Juniors won the reserve division and River Plate were second.

Eric Weil

CLAUSURA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Argentinos Jrs	19	12	5	2	35	23	41
Estudiantes	19	12	4	3	33	14	40
Godoy Cruz	19	11	4	4	28	14	37
Independiente	19	10	4	5	25	18	34
Banfield	19	9	5	5	24	16	32
Newell's	19	8	6	5	32	18	30
Lanus	19	8	5	6	25	23	29
Racing Club	19	9	2	8	21	22	29
Velez	19	7	6	6	25	20	27
Huracan	19	7	5	7	21	22	26
Tigre	19	7	3	9	28	26	24
Gimnasia LP	19	6	6	7	21	29	24
River Plate	19	6	4	9	16	21	22
Colon	19	4	9	6	20	32	21
San Lorenzo	19	6	2	11	16	21	20
Boca Juniors	19	5	5	9	28	35	20
Rosario	19	3	10	6	12	19	19
Arsenal	19	5	4	10	19	33	19
Chacarita	19	4	1	14	22	33	13
At Tucuman	19	1	10	8	14	26	13

Success...Argentinos Juniors celebrate their first league title for 25 years

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Trailblazer...Kawashima

BELGIUM
Eiji leads the way
Lierse have signed Japan's World Cup goalkeeper Eiji Kawashima from Kawasaki Frontale. The 27-year-old, who played in all four of his country's games in South Africa, said: "It's been difficult for Japanese goalkeepers to ply their trade in Europe. I'll try to succeed and pave the way for others."

BULGARIA
Brazilian wanderer returns to Europe
Cherno More have completed the surprise signing of former Brazil international Mario Jardel on a one-year deal.

The 36-year-old striker, who has previously played for Porto, Galatasaray and Sporting Lisbon, is back in Europe after a spell in his homeland.

GERMANY
Arne back in top flight
Germany World Cup defender Arne Friedrich has joined Wolfsburg on a three-year deal from Hertha, following the Berlin club's relegation.

GREECE
New national boss
Fernando Santos, who led PAOK to this season's

International job...Santos

RESULTS

EUROPE

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

1st qualifying round draw
FC Santa Coloma (And) v Birkirkara (Mlt)
Tre Fiori (SaM) v Rudar Pljevlja (Mne)

1st legs - June 29/30; 2nd legs - July 6/7

2nd qualifying round draw
AIK Stockholm (Swe) v Jeunesse d'Esch (Lux)
Aktobe (Kaz) v Olimpi Rustavi (Geo)
BATE Borisov (Bls) v FH Hafnarfjordur (Ice)
Bohemians (Rlr) v The New Saints (Wal)
Dinamo Zagreb (Cro) v Koper (Sln)
Ekranas (Lit) v HJK Helsinki (Fin)
FC Santa Coloma OR Birkirkara v Zilina (Slk)
Hapoel Tel Aviv (Isr) v Zeljeznicar (Bos)
Inter Baku (Aze) v Lech Poznan (Pol)
Levadia Tallinn (Est) v Debrecen (Hun)
Linfield (Nlr) v Rosenborg (Nor)
Litex Lovech (Bul) v Tre Fiori OR Rudar Pljevlja
Metalurgs Liepaja (Lat) v Sparta Prague (Cze)
Omonia (Cyp) v Renova (Mac)
Partizan Belgrade (Ser) v Pyunik (Arm)
Salzburg (Aut) v HB Torshavn (Far)
Sheriff (Mol) v Dinamo Tirana (Alb)

1st legs - July 13/14; 2nd legs - July 20/21

3rd qualifying round
Direct entrants:
Ajax (Hol)
Anderlecht (Blg)
Basle (Swi)
Celtic (Sco)
Copenhagen (Den)
Dynamo Kyiv (Ukr)
Fenerbahce (Tur)
Gent (Blg)
PAOK Salonika (Gre)
Sporting Braga (Por)
Unirea Urziceni (Rom)
Young Boys (Swi)
Zenit St Petersburg (Rus)

1st legs - July 27/28; 2nd legs - August 3/4
(losing teams enter Europa League at 4th qualifying round stage)

4th qualifying round
Direct entrants:
Auxerre (Fra)
Sampdoria (Ita)
Sevilla (Spa)
Tottenham (Eng)
Werder Bremen (Ger)

1st legs - August 17/18; 2nd legs - August 24/25
(losing teams enter Europa League at group stage)

Group stage
Direct entrants:
Arsenal (Eng)
Barcelona (Spa)
Bayern Munich (Ger)
Benfica (Por)
Bursaspor (Tur)
CFR Cluj (Rom)
Chelsea (Eng)
Internazionale (Ita; holders)
Lyon (Fra)
Manchester United (Eng)
Marseille (Fra)
Milan (Ita)
Panathinaikos (Gre)
Rangers (Sco)
Real Madrid (Spa)
Roma (Ita)
Rubin Kazan (Rus)
Schalke (Ger)
Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr)
Spartak Moscow (Rus)
Twente Enschede (Hol)
Valencia (Spa)

Matchdays:
September 14/15; September 28/29; October 19/20; November 2/3; November 23/24; December 7/8
(top two in each of the eight groups qualify for 1st knockout round; the eight third-placed teams enter Europa League at 1st knockout round stage)

EUROPA LEAGUE

1st qualifying round draw
Anorthosis (Cyp) v Banants (Arm)
Dinamo Tbilisi (Geo) v Flora Tallinn (Est)
Grevenmacher (Lux) v Dundalk (Rlr)
Kalmar (Swe) v EB/Streymur (Far)
KF Tirana (Alb) v Zalaegerszeg (Hun)
KR Reykjavik (Ice) v Glentoran (Nlr)
Laci (Alb) v Dnepr Mogilev (Bls)
Llanelli (Wal) v Tauras (Lit)
Nitra (Slk) v Gyor (Hun)
NSI Runavik (Far) v Gefle (Swe)
Olimpia Balti (Mol) v Xazar Lankaran (Aze)
Olimpija Ljubljana (Sln) v Siroki Brijeg (Bos)
Portadown (Nlr) v Skonto Riga (Lat)
Qarabag (Aze) v Metalurg Skopje (Mac)
Rabotnicki (Mac) v Lusitans (And)
Randers (Den) v F91 Dudelange (Lux)
Shakhtyor Karagandy (Kaz) v Ruch Chorzow (Pol)
Sibenik (Cro) v Sliema Wanderers (Mlt)
Tobol Kostanay (Kaz) v Zrinjski (Bos)
Torpedo Zhodino (Bls) v Fylkir (Ice)
TPS Turku (Fin) v Port Talbot Town (Wal)
Trans Narva (Est) v MyPa (Fin)
UE Santa Coloma (And) v Mogren (Mne)
Ulisses (Arm) v Bnei Yehuda (Isr)
Zestaponi (Geo) v Faetano (SaM)
Zeta (Mne) v Dacia Chisinau (Mol)

1st legs - July 1; 2nd legs - July 8

2nd qualifying round
Direct entrants:
APOEL (Cyp), Atyrau (Kaz), Austria Wien (Aut), Bangor City (Wal), Banik Ostrava (Cze), Besa (Alb), Besiktas (Tur), Borac Banja Luka (Bos), Breidablik (Ice), Brondby (Den), Buducnost Podgorica (Mne), Cercle Brugge (Blg), Cibalia (Cro), Cliftonville (Nlr), Differdange (Lux), Dinamo Bucharest (Rom), Dinamo Minsk (Bls), Dukla Banska Bystrica (Slk), Elfsborg (Swe), FK Baku (Aze), Gorica (Sln), Honka Espoo (Fin), Iskra-Stal (Mol), Jelgava (Lat), Karpaty Lviv (Ukr), Lausanne (Swi), Levski Sofia (Bul), Maccabi Tel Aviv (Isr), Maribor (Sln), Maritimo (Por), Mika Ashtarak (Arm), Molde (Nor), Motherwell (Sco), OFK Belgrade (Ser), Olympiakos (Gre), Rapid Wien (Aut), Sant Julia (And), Shamrock Rovers (Rlr), Siauliai (Lit), Sillamae Kalev (Est), Spartak Zlatibor Voda (Ser), Sporting Fingal (Rlr), Stabaek (Nor), Suduva (Lit), Teteks (Mac), Tre Penne (SaM), Utrecht (Hol), Vaduz (Lie), Valletta (Mlt), Ventspils (Lat), Videoton (Hun), Vikingur (Far), Wisla Krakow (Pol), WIT Georgia (Geo)

1st legs - July 15; 2nd legs - July 22

3rd qualifying round
Direct entrants:
Aalesund (Nor), Apollon (Cyp), Aris (Gre), AZ Alkmaar (Hol), Beroe (Bul), CSKA Sofia (Bul), Dnipro (Ukr), Galatasaray (Tur), Genk (Blg), Hajduk Split (Cro), Hibernian (Sco), IFK Gothenburg (Swe), Inter Turku (Fin), Jablonec (Cze), Jagiellonia Bialystok (Pol), Juventus (Ita), Liverpool (Eng), Lucerne (Swi), Maccabi Haifa (Isr), Montpellier (Fra), Nordsjaelland (Den), OB Odense (Den), Plzen (Cze), Red Star Belgrade (Ser), Sibir (Rus), Slovan Bratislava (Slk), Sporting Lisbon (Por), Sturm Graz (Aut), Stuttgart (Ger), Timisoara (Rom)

1st legs - July 29; 2nd legs - August 5

4th qualifying round
Direct entrants:
AEK Athens (Gre), Aston Villa (Eng), Bayer Leverkusen (Ger), Borussia Dortmund (Ger), Club Brugge (Blg), CSKA Moscow (Rus), Dundee United (Sco), Feyenoord (Hol), Getafe (Spa), Grasshopper (Swi), Lille (Fra), Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus), Mallorca (Spa), Manchester City (Eng), Metalist (Ukr), Napoli (Ita), Palermo (Ita), Paris Saint-Germain (Fra), Porto (Por), PSV Eindhoven (Hol), Steaua Bucharest (Rom), Tavriya (Ukr), Trabzonspor (Tur), Vaslui (Rom)
Plus, the 15 losing teams from the Champions League 3rd qualifying round

1st legs - August 19; 2nd legs - August 26

Group stage
Direct entrant:
Atletico Madrid (Spa; holders)
Plus, the 10 losing teams from the Champions League 4th qualifying round

Matchdays:
September 16; September 30; October 21; November 4; December 1/2; December 15/16
(top two in each of the 12 groups qualify for 1st knockout round, in which they will be joined by the eight third-placed teams from the Champions League group stage)

ARMENIA

ARMENIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Banants	13	10	2	1	31	13	32
Pyunik	14	9	2	3	34	14	29
Ulisses	13	9	2	2	23	7	29
Mika	13	6	4	3	22	13	22
Impuls	14	5	2	7	13	22	17
Gandzasar	14	4	1	9	11	22	13
Kilikia	14	3	1	10	14	32	10
Shirak	13	1	0	12	9	34	3

Standings on July 6

BELARUS

BELARUS

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
BATE	18	11	6	1	30	4	39
Dinamo Minsk	18	11	3	4	29	12	36
Shakhtyor	18	9	7	2	25	11	34
FK Minsk	18	10	3	5	31	15	33
Belshina	18	8	4	6	18	20	28
Dinamo Brest	18	6	6	6	25	20	24
Dnepr	18	6	4	8	16	29	22
Vitebsk	18	3	9	6	17	26	18
Naftan	17	3	8	6	14	16	17
Neman	18	2	9	7	12	22	15
Partizan	18	2	5	11	8	34	11
Torpedo	17	2	4	11	16	32	10

Standings on July 6

DENMARK

DENMARK – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Copenhagen	33	21	5	7	61	22	68
OB	33	17	8	8	46	34	59
Brondby	33	15	7	11	57	50	52
Esbjerg	33	13	11	9	48	43	50
AaB	33	13	9	11	36	30	48
Midtjylland	33	14	5	14	45	48	47
Nordsjaelland	33	12	7	14	40	41	43
Silkeborg	33	12	7	14	47	51	43
SonderjyskE	33	11	8	14	32	37	41
Randers	33	10	10	13	37	43	40
AGF (R)	33	10	8	15	36	47	38
HB Koge (R)	33	4	7	22	30	69	19

Promoted: *Horsens, Lyngby*

ESTONIA

ESTONIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Levadia	19	13	5	1	46	8	44
Trans	20	12	5	3	36	16	41
Flora	17	13	2	2	31	13	41
Kalju	19	10	5	4	36	19	35
Sillamae	18	10	3	5	41	21	33
Tammeka	20	7	6	7	25	25	27
Tulevik	19	4	2	13	13	28	14
Lootus	19	4	0	15	14	46	12
Kuressaare	19	3	2	14	16	51	11
Paide	18	2	2	14	9	40	8

Standings on July 6

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Champions League third qualifying round via the domestic play-offs, is the new national coach. The 55-year-old Portuguese succeeds Otto Rehhagel.

Meanwhile, reigning champions Panathinaikos have signed France winger Sidney Govou from Lyon. The 31-year-old joins Djibril Cisse, who he played with in their country's disastrous World Cup campaign.

On loan...Pepe

ITALY

Busy summer for Juve

Juventus have signed two of Italy's World Cup squad ahead of the coming season.

Centre-back Leonardo Bonucci joins from Bari for a fee of £12.75million, while Udinese winger Simone Pepe arrives on a season-long loan.

New coach Luigi Delneri has also acquired Uruguay winger Jorge Martinez from Catania, Milan goalkeeper Marco Storari and right-back Marco Motta on a year-long loan deal from Udinese.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Template for survival

Clubs have voted to introduce a salary cap for the new Premiership season. From now on, clubs will have to identify "allowable income" from which a maximum of 60 per cent will be permitted to pay players' salaries.

Hugh Wade, chairman of the IFA Premiership Management Committee, said: "I trust that this act of self regulation by the clubs will ensure that the Premiership continues to grow."

IFA chief executive Patrick Nelson added: "I believe it is vital for the long term survival of our local game."

FAROE ISLANDS

FAROE ISLANDS	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
NSI	14	9	2	3	30	15	29
HB	14	8	4	2	28	18	28
IF	15	7	4	4	27	26	25
EB/Streymur	14	6	4	4	24	19	22
B36	14	5	6	3	24	18	21
Vikingur	14	4	6	4	23	23	18
B68	14	4	3	7	21	26	15
B71	14	3	4	7	13	24	13
AB	15	1	7	7	18	28	10
Suduroy	14	2	4	8	15	26	10

Standings on July 6

FINLAND

June 4: Tampere 0 Lahti 0.
June 5: Oulu 2 Honka 0.
June 6: TPS 1 Mariehamn 4; HJK 2 Jaro 1; JJK 0 Inter 3.
June 7: MyPa 1 KuPS 1; VPS 2 Haka 1.
June 11: Jaro 1 JJK 3.
June 12: Lahti 0 Oulu 3.
June 13: KuPS 0 Honka 2; Mariehamn 2 Haka 3; HJK 2 MyPa 0.
June 14: Tampere 1 TPS 1; Inter 1 VPS 0.
June 18: JJK 0 Mariehamn 2.
June 19: Oulu 0 TPS 2.
June 20: MyPa 0 Jaro 1; Honka 0 Tampere 2; Inter 0 HJK 0.
June 21: Haka 2 KuPS 1; VPS 1 Lahti 1.
June 23: TPS 0 Jaro 3; Mariehamn 1 MyPa 2; HJK 1 JJK 0.
June 30: KuPS 6 Tampere 2; Haka 1 Inter 3; Lahti 2 Honka 4.
July 2: VPS 2 Oulu 0.
July 3: Mariehamn 2 Lahti 2.
July 4: Honka 4 Haka 2; Jaro 0 KuPS 1; TPS 0 HJK 1; MyPa 3 Inter 2.
July 5: Tampere 3 VPS 0; JJK 6 Oulu 1.

FINLAND	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
HJK	12	8	3	1	20	6	27
Honka	12	7	2	3	20	11	23
KuPS	12	6	2	4	21	19	20
Tampere	12	5	4	3	18	18	19
Haka	12	5	2	5	18	19	17
JJK	12	5	1	6	16	15	16
MyPa	12	4	4	4	16	18	16
Jaro	12	4	3	5	17	16	15
Inter	12	4	3	5	15	16	15
VPS	12	4	3	5	13	14	15
TPS	12	3	5	4	13	16	14
Oulu	12	4	2	6	14	20	14
Mariehamn	12	2	4	6	15	20	10
Lahti	12	1	6	5	10	18	9

FRANCE

League fixtures, opening round*

Sat, August 7
Auxerre v Lorient
Lens v Nancy
Lyon v Monaco
Marseille v Caen
Nice v Valenciennes
Paris Saint-Germain v Saint-Etienne
Rennes v Lille
Sochaux v Arles-Avignon
Toulouse v Brest
Sun, August 8
Montpellier v Bordeaux

**For full fixture list, visit www.worldsoccer.com*

GERMANY

League fixtures, opening round*

Fri, August 20
Bayern Munich v Wolfsburg
Sat, August 21
Borussia Dortmund v Bayer Leverkusen
Freiburg v St Pauli
Hamburg v Schalke
Hannover v Eintracht Frankfurt
1899 Hoffenheim v Werder Bremen
Koln v Kaiserslautern
Mainz v Stuttgart
Monchengladbach v Nurnberg

**For full fixture list, visit www.worldsoccer.com*

GREECE

GREECE – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Panathinaikos	30	22	4	4	54	17	70
Olympiakos*	30	19	7	4	47	18	64
PAOK*	30	19	5	6	41	16	62
AEK*	30	15	8	7	43	31	53
Aris*	30	12	10	8	35	28	46
Kavala	30	10	9	11	31	32	39
Atromitos	30	10	8	12	34	36	38
Larisa	30	10	7	13	31	42	37
Panionios	30	9	10	11	34	35	37
Iraklis	30	10	7	13	39	41	37
Ergotelis	30	9	9	12	37	41	36
Asteras	30	10	6	14	29	36	36
Xanthi	30	10	5	15	27	36	35
Levadiakos (R)	30	9	7	14	31	44	34
Giannina (R)	30	7	7	16	27	46	28
Panth'kikos (R)	30	3	3	24	21	62	12

**Teams placed 2nd to 5th entered play-offs to determine Greece's second Champions League representatives – PAOK won the place*

Promoted: *Olympiakos Volou, Kerkyra, Panserraikos Serres*

HUNGARY

HUNGARY – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Debrecen	30	20	2	8	63	37	62
Videoton	30	18	7	5	59	31	61
Gyor	30	15	12	3	38	18	57
Ujpest	30	17	4	9	49	39	55
Zalaegerszeg	30	15	8	7	59	44	53
MTK	30	12	7	11	52	41	43
Ferencvaros	30	10	11	9	34	35	41
Szombathely	30	10	9	11	46	49	39
Honved	30	9	11	10	38	35	38
Kecskemet	30	10	7	13	50	56	37
Papa	30	10	5	15	39	50	35
Kaposvar	30	8	8	14	38	50	32
Vasas	30	8	7	15	39	61	31
Paks	30	7	10	13	30	44	31
Nyiregy'za (R)	30	6	9	15	41	60	27
Diosgyor (R)	30	4	5	21	31	56	17

Promoted: *Siofok, Szolnoki*

ICELAND

ICELAND	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Breidablik	10	6	2	2	22	13	20
IBV	10	6	2	2	16	8	20
Keflavik	10	5	4	1	11	9	19
Fram	10	4	5	1	17	12	17
Valur	10	4	4	2	17	15	16
FH	10	4	3	3	16	16	15
Stjarnan	10	3	4	3	20	15	13
KR	10	3	3	4	14	15	12
Fylkir	10	3	3	4	18	20	12
Selfoss	10	2	1	7	12	20	7
Grindavik	10	2	0	8	10	20	6
Haukar	10	0	5	5	10	20	5

Standings on July 6

ITALY

ITALY – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Inter	38	24	10	4	75	34	82
Roma	38	24	8	6	68	41	80
Milan	38	20	10	8	60	39	70
Sampdoria	38	19	10	9	49	41	67
Palermo	38	18	11	9	59	47	65
Napoli	38	15	14	9	50	43	59
Juventus	38	16	7	15	55	56	55
Parma	38	14	10	14	46	51	52
Genoa	38	14	9	15	57	61	51
Bari	38	13	11	14	49	49	50
Fiorentina	38	13	8	17	48	47	47
Lazio	38	11	13	14	39	43	46
Catania	38	10	15	13	44	45	45
Cagliari	38	11	11	16	56	58	44
Udinese	38	11	11	16	54	59	44
Chievo	38	12	8	18	37	42	44
Bologna	38	10	12	16	42	55	42
Atalanta (R)	38	9	8	21	37	53	35
Siena (R)	38	7	10	21	40	67	31
Livorno (R)	38	7	8	23	27	61	29

Promoted: *Lecce, Cesena, Brescia*

KAZAKHSTAN

KAZAKHSTAN	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tobol	18	10	5	3	26	12	35
Irtysh	18	9	7	2	25	11	34
Shakhtyor	18	10	3	5	21	14	33
Aktobe	18	9	4	5	24	16	31
Zhetysu	18	8	7	3	18	10	31
Lokomotiv	18	9	1	8	27	17	28
Ordabasy	18	7	5	6	15	14	26
Atyrau	18	8	2	8	23	23	26
Taraz	18	4	6	8	19	24	18
Kairat	18	4	5	9	7	16	17
Okzhetpes	18	2	4	12	11	34	10
Akzhayik	18	2	3	13	15	40	9

Standings on July 6

LATVIA

LATVIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Skonto	11	9	1	1	34	7	28
Ventspils	11	9	1	1	28	5	28
Metalurgs	11	7	3	1	23	8	24
Daugava	11	5	4	2	12	8	19
Jurmala	11	4	1	6	15	19	13
Jelgava	10	3	2	5	19	16	11
Tranzits	12	3	2	7	8	18	11
Jauniba	11	3	1	7	8	33	10
Blazma	11	3	0	8	10	26	9
Olimps/RFS	11	1	1	9	11	28	4

Standings on July 6

LITHUANIA

LITHUANIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ekranas	15	12	2	1	37	9	38
Zalgiris	16	10	3	3	26	13	33
Suduva	15	9	5	1	30	10	32
Tauras	14	7	4	3	16	6	25
Vetra*	16	8	6	2	30	13	21
Banga	16	5	5	6	17	19	20
Siauliai	15	4	6	5	17	20	18
Kruoja	15	4	3	8	18	31	15
Klaipeda	14	1	3	10	11	34	6
Mazeikiai	15	0	5	10	10	32	5
Atletas**	15	0	4	11	7	32	-2

Standings on July 6
**9pts deducted – 6 for licence irregularities; 3 for failing to pay a former player*
***6pts deducted for licence irregularities*

NORWAY

June 5: Stromsgodset 2 Tromso 1.
June 6: Odd Grenland 1 Honefoss 0; Valerenga 5 Haugesund 2; Molde 3 Lillestrom 3; Rosenborg 4 Kongsvinger 0; Sandefjord 1 Stabaek 1; Brann 2 Aalesund 1.
June 7: Start 1 Viking 1.
July 3: Rosenborg 1 Sandefjord 0.
July 4: Viking 3 Odd Grenland 1; Tromso 0 Aalesund 1; Honefoss 1 Stromsgodset 1; Kongsvinger 0 Brann 3; Haugesund 4 Start 2; Lillestrom 1 Valerenga 4.
July 5: Stabaek 4 Molde 3.

NORWAY	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rosenborg	15	9	6	0	27	7	33
Tromso	15	9	3	3	18	11	30
Valerenga	15	8	4	3	31	16	28
Aalesund	15	8	2	5	25	18	26
Lillestrom	15	5	8	2	26	17	23
Viking	15	6	5	4	21	14	23
Stabaek	15	6	5	4	23	19	23
Odd Grenland	15	5	6	4	25	25	21
Haugesund	15	5	5	5	23	21	20
Stromsgodset	15	6	2	7	22	31	20
Start	15	5	4	6	27	28	19
Brann	15	4	4	7	20	24	16
Molde	15	4	4	7	26	33	16
Honefoss	15	3	3	9	8	26	12
Kongsvinger	15	3	2	10	12	29	11
Sandefjord	15	1	3	11	10	25	6

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Celtic bhoys...Cha (left) and Ki

PORTUGAL

Record domestic deal

Porto have signed Sporting Lisbon captain Joao Moutinho for £9million – the most expensive transfer between two Portuguese clubs.

SCOTLAND

Cha reunited with Ki

South Korea defender Cha Du-ri has joined countryman Ki Sung-yueng at Celtic following his move from Freiburg in Germany.

SPAIN

Laudrup takes over

Michael Laudrup, who was sacked by Spartak Moscow in April 2009, is the new coach of Mallorca.

The former Denmark star replaces Gregorio Manzano, whose contract was not renewed at the end of last season due to the club's financial woes.

SWEDEN

Champions struggle

Last year's league champions AIK, who are battling against relegation in 14th place this term, have appointed Alex Miller as their new coach.

The Scot – who has managed Hibernian and

Mallorca man...Laudrup

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

June 8: UCD 0 Sligo 2; St Patrick's 3 Bray 0; Galway 2 Bohemians 2; Dundalk 1 Fingal 2; Shamrock 1 Drogheda 1.
June 25: Bohemians 3 Dundalk 0; Bray 0 Shamrock 0; Drogheda 0 Galway 1; Fingal 1 UCD 2.
June 26: Sligo 0 St Patrick's 0.
July 2: Bohemians 1 Fingal 1; Drogheda 1 UCD 0; St Patrick's 4 Galway 2; Sligo 1 Shamrock 2.
July 5: Dundalk 2 Drogheda 1; Galway 2 Bray 2; UCD 0 Bohemians 2; Fingal 1 Sligo 1; Shamrock 2 St Patrick's 1.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shamrock	20	9	8	3	21	15	35
St Patrick's	19	10	4	5	29	12	34
Bohemians	19	9	6	4	26	16	33
Dundalk	19	9	4	6	25	21	31
Fingal	19	7	9	3	24	17	30
UCD	19	7	5	7	22	19	26
Sligo	19	5	9	5	27	18	24
Galway	20	5	7	8	21	27	22
Drogheda	20	3	6	11	18	40	15
Bray	18	1	4	13	12	40	7

ROMANIA

ROMANIA – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
CFR	34	20	9	5	46	23	69
Urziceni	34	18	12	4	53	26	66
Vaslui	34	18	8	8	44	28	62
Steaua	34	18	8	8	49	36	62
Timisoara	34	15	14	5	55	27	59
Dinamo	34	13	14	7	48	37	53
Rapid	34	14	10	10	53	38	52
Otelul	34	14	8	12	38	38	50
Brasov	34	12	10	12	40	30	46
Gaz Metan	34	9	15	10	33	37	42
Gloria	34	10	11	13	35	46	41
International	34	10	6	18	32	49	36
Universitatea	34	11	3	20	44	52	36
Astra	34	8	12	14	33	45	36
Pandurii (R)	34	7	13	14	19	30	34
Politehnica (R)	34	7	10	17	28	50	31
Ceahlaul (R)	34	6	10	18	28	57	28
Alba Iulia (R)	34	7	5	22	33	62	26

Promoted: *Victoria Branesti, Sportul Studentesc, Tirgu Mures, Universitatea Cluj*

RUSSIA

July 4: Zenit 2 Anzhi 1.

RUSSIA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zenit	11	8	3	0	15	4	27
CSKA	11	7	2	2	19	9	23
Rubin	11	5	5	1	9	3	20
Spartak N	11	5	4	2	14	9	19
Tom	11	5	3	3	14	12	18
Rostov	11	5	1	5	11	16	16
Spartak M	10	4	4	2	14	11	16
Lokomotiv	11	4	3	4	13	11	15
Dynamo	11	3	5	3	10	9	14
Terek	11	3	5	3	11	10	14
Alania	11	3	3	5	12	15	12
Anzhi	11	2	4	5	10	13	10
Amkar	11	2	3	6	7	13	9
Krylia Sovetov	11	2	2	7	8	18	8
Sibir	10	2	1	7	12	20	7
Saturn	11	1	4	6	5	11	7

SPAIN

SPAIN – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barcelona	38	31	6	1	98	24	99
Real Madrid	38	31	3	4	102	35	96
Valencia	38	21	8	9	59	40	71
Sevilla	38	19	6	13	65	49	63
Mallorca	38	18	8	12	59	44	62
Getafe	38	17	7	14	58	48	58
Villarreal	38	16	8	14	58	57	56
Ath Bilbao	38	15	9	14	50	53	54
At Madrid	38	13	8	17	57	61	47
Dep Coruna	38	13	8	17	35	49	47
Espanyol	38	11	11	16	29	46	44
Osasuna	38	11	10	17	37	46	43
Almeria	38	10	12	16	43	55	42
Zaragoza	38	10	11	17	46	64	41
Sporting Gijon	38	9	13	16	36	51	40
R Santander	38	9	12	17	42	59	39
Malaga	38	7	16	15	42	48	37
Valladolid (R)	38	7	15	16	37	62	36
Tenerife (R)	38	9	9	20	40	74	36
Xerez (R)	38	8	10	20	38	66	34

Promoted: *Real Sociedad, Hercules, Levante*

SWEDEN

SWEDEN	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Helsingborgs	14	11	2	1	20	6	35
Malmo	14	9	3	2	29	16	30
Orebro	14	8	1	5	17	14	25
Mjallby	14	7	3	4	18	11	24
Elfsborg	14	6	5	3	27	16	23
Kalmar	14	4	7	3	17	18	19
Bromm'karna	14	5	3	6	12	15	18
Halmstads	14	5	2	7	15	18	17
GAIS	14	4	5	5	12	16	17
Djurgardens	14	4	4	6	14	16	16
Gefle	14	4	4	6	13	16	16
Hacken	14	4	4	6	13	18	16
IFK	14	3	6	5	16	12	15
AIK	14	3	3	8	11	19	12
Atvidabergs	14	3	3	8	14	24	12
Trelleborgs	14	3	3	8	10	23	12

Standings on July 6

SOUTH AMERICA

LIBERTADORES CUP

Semi-finals draw

Guadalajara (Mex) v Universidad de Chile (Chl)*
Internacional (Bra) v Sao Paulo (Bra)**

**1st leg - July 27; 2nd leg - August 3*
***1st leg - July 28; 2nd leg - August 5*

SUDAMERICANA CUP

1st round draw

Bolivia 3rd reps v *Chile 2nd reps* (A)
Guarani (Par) v River Plate (Uru) (B)
Cesar Vallejo (Per) v Barcelona (Ecu) (C)
Atletico Huila (Col) v Trujillanos (Ven) (D)
Chile 3rd reps v Oriente Petrolero (Bol) (E)
Defensor Sporting (Uru) v Olimpia (Par) (F)
Deportivo Quito (Ecu) v San Martin (Per) (G)
Deportivo Lara (Ven) v Indep Santa Fe (Col) (H)

2nd round draw

Game D winners v San Jose (Bol)
Independiente (Arg) v Argentinos Juniors (Arg)
Game C winners v Penarol (Uru)
Vitoria (Bra) v Palmeiras (Bra)
Game H winners v Caracas (Ven)
Santos (Bra) v Avai (Bra)
Game E winners v Tolima (Col)
Game B winners v San Felipe (Chl)
Velez Sarsfield (Arg) v Banfield (Arg)
Game G winners v Emelec (Ecu)
Gremio Prudente (Bra) v Atletico Mineiro (Bra)
Game A winners v Cerro Porteno (Par)
Goias (Bra) v Gremio (Bra)
Game F winners v Huancayo (Per)
Newell's Old Boys (Arg) v Estudiantes (Arg)

Bye to last 16: LDU Quito (Ecu; holders)

1st and 2nd round games scheduled to be played between August 4 and September 29

BOLIVIA

Apertura

Winners group

BOLIVIA – APERTURA – WINNERS GP – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wilstermann	10	6	2	2	15	11	20
Oriente	10	6	1	3	18	10	19
Aurora	10	4	2	4	20	18	14
The Strongest	10	3	4	3	15	14	13
Bolivar	10	3	2	5	10	14	11
San Jose	10	1	3	6	12	23	6

Losers group

BOLIVIA – APERTURA – LOSERS GP – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Universitario	10	6	2	2	20	10	20
Blooming	10	6	1	3	21	15	19
Potosi	10	5	1	4	19	16	16
La Paz	10	3	2	5	17	17	11
Mamore	10	3	2	5	10	20	11
Guabira	10	3	0	7	10	19	9

BRAZIL

June 3: Gremio 2 Mineiro 1; Vasco da Gama 0 Guarani 1; Corinthians 2 Internacional 0.
June 5: Avai 0 Fluminense 3; Flamengo 1 Goias 2; Vitoria 1 Paranaense 0.
June 6: Sao Paulo 3 Gremio 1; Santos 4 Vasco da Gama 0; Botafogo 2 Corinthians 2; Mineiro 0 Ceara 1; Internacional 1 Palmeiras 1; Guarani 1 Gremio Prudente 0; Goianiense 2 Cruzeiro 1.

BRAZIL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Corinthians	7	5	2	0	15	8	17
Ceara	7	5	2	0	7	1	17
Fluminense	7	5	0	2	11	5	15
Santos	7	3	3	1	15	10	12
Guarani	7	3	3	1	8	7	12
Sao Paulo	7	3	2	2	9	6	11
Goias	7	3	1	3	9	10	10
Botafogo	7	2	3	2	13	11	9
Flamengo	7	2	3	2	9	8	9
Palmeiras	7	2	3	2	6	5	9
Cruzeiro	7	2	3	2	8	8	9
Avai	7	2	2	3	10	11	8
Gremio	7	2	2	3	10	11	8
Vitoria	7	2	2	3	7	8	8
G Prudente	7	2	2	3	9	12	8
Internacional	7	2	1	4	11	13	7
Paranaense	7	2	1	4	10	15	7
Mineiro	7	2	0	5	10	16	6
Vasco	7	1	2	4	5	12	5
Goianiense	7	1	1	5	5	10	4

CHILE

Apertura

CHILE – APERTURA	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Colo Colo	14	10	2	2	34	13	32
Univ Chile	13	9	1	3	36	19	28
Univ Catolica	14	8	3	3	27	16	27
Espanola	15	6	7	2	23	19	25
O'Higgins	14	6	4	4	18	12	22
Everton	14	6	3	5	19	16	21
Cobresal	15	6	3	6	26	26	21
Huachipato	14	5	5	4	18	17	20
San Felipe	15	5	4	6	17	20	19
Nublense	15	4	7	4	26	30	19
Wanderers	15	4	6	5	25	21	18
Audax Italiano	14	5	2	7	27	35	17
Palestino	15	4	4	7	15	18	16
Cobreloa	14	3	6	5	16	18	15
U Concepcion	14	3	6	5	18	22	15
Morning	15	3	5	7	13	22	14
La Serena	15	3	3	9	16	40	12
San Luis	15	2	5	8	19	29	11

Standings on July 6

ECUADOR

1st stage

June 3: Cuenca 1 Dep Quito 0.
June 6: Independiente 0 Macara 0; Olmedo 2 Univ Catolica 0; Espoli 2 LDU 1; El Nacional 4 Manta 0; Emelec 4 Cuenca 0; Dep Quito 0 Barcelona 1.
June 11: Cuenca 0 Olmedo 1; Univ Catolica 2 Independiente 0.
June 12: Macara 3 El Nacional 3; Manta 1 Espoli 0; LDU 2 Dep Quito 0; Barcelona 1 Emelec 2.
June 16: El Nacional 4 Espoli 0; Emelec 1 LDU 0; Independiente 2 Cuenca 2; Macara 1 Univ Catolica 1; Olmedo 0 Barcelona 0; Dep Quito 2 Manta 1.
June 20: LDU 5 Olmedo 0; Univ Catolica 1 El Nacional 1; Cuenca 0 Macara 1; Espoli 0 Dep Quito 3; Manta 1 Emelec 3; Barcelona 0 Independiente 1.
June 26: Univ Catolica 3 Cuenca 1; Olmedo 1 Manta 0; El Nacional 2 Dep Quito 1.
June 27: Macara 1 Barcelona 2; Emelec 4 Espoli 0; Independiente 0 LDU 2.
July 2: Espoli 2 Olmedo 2.
July 3: Dep Quito 1 Emelec 0; Manta 3 Independiente 1; Barcelona 5 Univ Catolica 1.
July 4: Cuenca 0 El Nacional 0; LDU 3 Macara 1.

ECUADOR – 1ST STAGE – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Emelec	22	14	4	4	37	22	46
LDU	22	12	8	2	36	10	44
Barcelona	22	12	7	3	26	12	43
Dep Quito	22	10	4	8	27	23	34
Cuenca	22	6	9	7	21	24	27
El Nacional	22	5	10	7	34	27	25
Independiente	22	5	10	7	26	31	25
Manta	22	5	9	8	23	30	24
Olmedo	22	5	8	9	18	27	23
Espoli	22	6	4	12	22	41	22
Univ Catolica	22	4	8	10	21	32	20
Macara	22	3	9	10	22	34	18

PERU

First stage

June 5: Leon 3 Inti Gas 0; Sport Boys 2 CNI 4; San Martin 3 Cienciano 0; Cesar Vallejo 1 Total Chalaco 2; Alianza Atletico 1 Alianza Lima 1; Universitario 1 Juan Aurich 0.
June 6: Huancayo 1 Jose Galvez 0; Melgar 1 Sporting Cristal 1.

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Aberdeen in his homeland – replaces Bjorn Wesstrom, who stays on as assistant to the new boss.

Elsewhere, Eddie Moussa, a striker with second division side Assyriska, was shot dead in a cafe in Stockholm.

BOLIVIA

Coming from behind

Jorge Wilstermann are the 2010 apertura champions after two goals from Brazilian defender Nilton De Oliveira gave them the title and a place in next year's Libertadores Cup as they came from behind to beat rivals Aurora 2-1.

International goalkeeper Carlos Arias was suspended for 20 matches after treading on the foot of a referee who was about to show him a second yellow card in a match for his club side, Bolivar, against Potosi.

BRAZIL

Top on goal difference

A last-minute equaliser by Paulo Andre earned Corinthians a 2-2 draw at Botafogo to keep them top of the table – ahead of promoted Ceara on goal difference.

USA

Stars return to MLS

USA World Cup players Edson Buddle and Landon Donovan made their first appearance for Los Angeles Galaxy since returning home from South Africa in a 3-1 win over Seattle Sounders.

Buddle, Juninho and James Riley (own goal) scored for Galaxy, with Steve Zakuani replying for the visitors. The result puts Galaxy nine points clear at the top of the MLS Western Conference.

Back in LA...Buddle and Donovan

June 9: Cienciano 2 Sport Boys 0; Inti Gas 4 Alianza Atletico 1; CNI 1 Huancayo 1; Jose Galvez 0 Cesar Vallejo 2; Alianza Lima 2 San Martin 1; Juan Aurich 3 Leon 2.
June 10: Total Chalaco 1 Melgar 2.
June 13: Huancayo 1 Cienciano 1; Melgar 2 Jose Galvez 0; Leon 6 Sporting Cristal 0; Alianza Atletico 2 Juan Aurich 2; San Martin 2 Inti Gas 1; Cesar Vallejo 2 CNI 0; Sport Boys 2 Alianza Lima 1; Universitario 0 Total Chalaco 0.
June 16: Sporting Cristal 1 Universitario 2.
June 19: Total Chalaco 1 Leon 0; Inti Gas 2 Sport Boys 1; Alianza Lima 4 Huancayo 0; Jose Galvez 0 Universitario 3; Juan Aurich 1 San Martin 1.
June 20: Sporting Cristal 2 Alianza Atletico 1; Cienciano 2 Cesar Vallejo 0; CNI 5 Melgar 1.
June 26: Universitario 1 CNI 2; Sport Boys 1 Juan Aurich 0.
June 27: San Martin 2 Sporting Cristal 1; Alianza Atletico 3 Total Chalaco 0; Huancayo 3 Inti Gas 0; Leon 1 Jose Galvez 1; Cesar Vallejo 1 Alianza Lima 1.
June 28: Melgar 3 Cienciano 0.
July 3: Total Chalaco 2 San Martin 2; Inti Gas 1 Cesar Vallejo 2; CNI 1 Leon 1.
July 4: Cienciano 1 Universitario 1; Sporting Cristal 1 Sport Boys 1; Juan Aurich 2 Huancayo 0; Jose Galvez 0 Alianza Atletico 0; Alianza Lima 2 Melgar 1.

PERU – FIRST STAGE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
San Martin	22	14	5	3	47	22	47
Cesar Vallejo	22	13	4	5	41	22	43
Alianza Lima	22	11	5	6	37	25	38
Universitario	22	11	4	7	31	18	37
Leon	22	11	3	8	36	23	36
Juan Aurich	22	9	6	7	30	24	33
S Cristal	22	9	6	7	32	33	33
Huancayo	22	8	5	9	34	33	29
Inti Gas	22	9	2	11	28	30	29
Melgar	22	6	8	8	29	34	26
Total Chalaco	22	6	7	9	22	31	25
Cienciano*	22	7	5	10	23	33	24
CNI	22	6	5	11	30	41	23
Sport Boys	22	6	4	12	22	39	22
Jose Galvez	22	4	8	10	12	28	20
Al Atletico	22	3	9	10	16	34	18

**2pts deducted for failing to pay a former player*

CONCACAF

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Preliminary round draw

Brujas (CR) v Joe Public (T&T)
CD FAS (EIS) v Xelaju (Gtm)
LA Galaxy (USA) v Puerto Rico Islanders (PR)
San Francisco (Pan) v Cruz Azul (Mex)
San Juan Jabloteh (T&T) v Santos Laguna (Mex)
Seattle Sounders (USA) v Isidro Metapan (EIS)
Tauro (Pan) v Marathon (Hnd)
Toronto (Can) v Motagua (Hnd)

1st legs - July 27-29; 2nd legs - August 3-5

Group stage draw

Group A
Arabe Unido (Pan)
Real Salt Lake (USA)
San Francisco OR Cruz Azul
Toronto OR Motagua

Group B
Brujas OR Joe Public
Columbus Crew (USA)
Municipal (Gtm)
San Juan Jabloteh OR Santos Laguna

Group C
Monterrey (Mex)
Saprissa (CR)
Seattle Sounders OR Isidro Metapan
Tauro OR Marathon

Group D
CD FAS OR Xelaju
LA Galaxy OR Puerto Rico Islanders
Olimpia (Hnd)
Toluca (Mex)

Matchdays:
August 17-19, August 24-26, September 14-16, September 21-23, September 28-30, October 19-21

Top two in each group qualify for the quarter-finals

CUBA

Championship

Final, 1st leg
Mar 31
Ciego de Avila 3 (Cervantes 19, Duarte 29, Fernandez 78)
Camaguey 0
HT: 2-0

Final, 2nd leg
Apr 4
Camaguey 3 (Coroneaux 14, Garcia 42, Quesada 87)
Ciego de Avila 3 (Fernandez 31, 70, 88)
HT: 2-1
Ciego de Avila 6-3 on agg

EL SALVADOR

Clausura

Final
May 23 - San Salvador
Aguila 1 (Corrales 63)
Isidro Metapan 3 (Blanco 22, 45+2, Suarez 90+6)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Aguilar

GUATEMALA

Clausura

Final, 1st leg
May 13
Municipal 3 (Castillo 42, Avila 65, Plata 87)
Xelaju 1 (Betancur 90+2)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 23,769

Final, 2nd leg
May 15
Xelaju 0
Municipal 4 (Castillo 18, Cabrera og 45, Plata 83, Rodriguez 90+3)
HT: 0-2. **Ref:** Batres
Sent off: Contreras (Xelaju) 81min
Municipal 7-1 on agg

NICARAGUA

Clausura

Final, 1st leg
May 4
Walter Ferreti 1 (Mendieta og 72)
Real Esteli 1 (Wilson 32)
HT: 0-1

Final, 2nd leg
May 9
Real Esteli 0
Walter Ferreti 0
Agg 1-1. Real Esteli on away goals

Overall championship play-off

(apertura winners, Walter Ferreti v clausura winners, Real Esteli)

1st leg
May 12
Real Esteli 0
Walter Ferreti 0
Sent off: Delgado (Walter Ferreti)

2nd leg
May 16
Walter Ferreti 1 (Perez 18)
Real Esteli 1 (Calero 35)
HT: 1-1
Agg 1-1. Real Esteli on away goals

PANAMA

Clausura

Final
May 14 - Panama City
Arabe Unido 1 (Justavino 46)
San Francisco 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 20,125. **Ref:** Vidal
Sent off: P Rodriguez (Arabe Unido) 49min

UNITED STATES

Regular season

June 5: Toronto 0 Kansas City 0; DC United 0 Salt Lake 0; New York 1 Chivas 0; Los Angeles 4 Houston 1; Dallas 2 San Jose 0; Chicago 2 Philadelphia 1; Colorado 1 Columbus 0; Seattle 3 New England 0.
June 9: Chicago 2 Colorado 2; Salt Lake 1 Los Angeles 0.
June 10: Kansas City 2 Philadelphia 0; Seattle 2 DC United 3.
June 25: Salt Lake 0 San Jose 0.
June 26: Columbus 2 DC United 0; Toronto 0 Los Angeles 0; Houston 2 Colorado 2; Kansas City 0 New York 3; Chivas 1 Dallas 2.
June 27: New England 0 Chicago 1; Philadelphia 3 Seattle 1.
July 1: Toronto 1 Houston 1.
July 2: Salt Lake 5 New England 0.
July 3: Columbus 2 Chicago 1; Dallas 1 Kansas City 0; San Jose 1 DC United 1; Chivas 1 Philadelphia 1.
July 4: Colorado 1 New York 1; Los Angeles 3 Seattle 1.

USA – REGULAR – EASTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Columbus	13	8	3	2	20	12	27
New York	14	8	1	5	18	17	25
Toronto	13	5	4	4	16	15	19
Chicago	13	4	5	4	18	18	17
Kansas City	13	3	3	7	11	17	12
Philadelphia	12	3	2	7	15	23	11
New England	14	3	2	9	13	26	11
DC United	14	3	2	9	11	25	11

USA – REGULAR – WESTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Los Angeles	15	11	3	1	25	5	36
Salt Lake	14	8	3	3	27	11	27
Colorado	13	6	4	3	16	12	22
Dallas	13	5	6	2	16	12	21
San Jose	13	5	4	4	16	15	19
Houston	15	5	3	7	21	22	18
Seattle	15	4	3	8	16	23	15
Chivas	14	3	2	9	15	21	11

AFRICA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group draw & match schedule

Group A
Dynamos (Zim)
ES Setif (Alg)
Esperance Tunis (Tun)
TP Mazembe (DRC)

July 16-18	Dynamos v TP Mazembe
July 16-18	ES Setif v Esperance
July 30-Aug 1	TP Mazembe v ES Setif
July 30-Aug 1	Esperance v Dynamos
Aug 13-15	Dynamos v ES Setif
Aug 13-15	TP Mazembe v Esperance
Aug 27-29	ES Setif v Dynamos
Aug 27-29	Esperance v TP Mazembe
Sep 10-12	TP Mazembe v Dynamos
Sep 10-12	Esperance v ES Setif
Sep 17-19	ES Setif v TP Mazembe
Sep 17-19	Dynamos v Esperance

Group B
Al Ahly (Egy)
Heartland (Nga)
Ismaili (Egy)
JS Kabylie (Alg)

July 16-18	Ismaili v JS Kabylie
July 16-18	Heartland v Al Ahly
July 30-Aug 1	JS Kabylie v Heartland
July 30-Aug 1	Al Ahly v Ismaili
Aug 13-15	Ismaili v Heartland
Aug 13-15	JS Kabylie v Al Ahly
Aug 27-29	Heartland v Ismaili
Aug 27-29	Al Ahly v JS Kabylie
Sep 10-12	JS Kabylie v Ismaili
Sep 10-12	Al Ahly v Heartland
Sep 17-19	Heartland v JS Kabylie
Sep 17-19	Ismaili v Al Ahly

Top two in both groups qualify for semi-finals

CONFEDERATION CUP

Intermediate round draw

(losing teams from the Champions League 2nd round enter at this stage)
Al Hilal (Sud) v Caps United (Zim)
Al Ittihad (Lby) v Primeiro Agosto (Ang)
Al Merreikh (Sud) v AS Fan (Ngr)
Djoliba (Mli) v CR Belouizdad (Alg)
Gaborone United (Bot) v Haras Hedood (Egy)
Petro Atletico (Ang) v CS Sfaxien (Tun)
SuperSport United (SAf) v FUS Rabat (Mor)
Zanaco (Zam) v Enyimba (Nga)

1st legs - July 16-18; 2nd legs - July 30-Aug 1

Winners qualify for group stage

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WORLD SERVICE

EGYPT

Cup win on penalties

Haras Hedood retained the Egyptian Cup by beating league champions Al Ahly 5-4 on penalties in the Final.

RWANDA

APR triumph

APR sealed the league title with a 4-1 win against Etincelles. The army side won with two goals apiece from Malawi internationals Chiukepo Msowoya – who is expected to join South African side Orlando Pirates – and Victor Nyirenda.

TUNISIA

Bracci given control

Francois Bracci has signed a one-year deal to succeed Habib Majeri as coach of Club Africain. The 59-year-old, who represented France at the 1978 World Cup, led MC Algiers to the Algerian title last season.

UGANDA

First league title

Goals from Owen Kasule and Tony Odur gave Bunamwaya a 2-0 win over SC Villa and ensured the club's first Uganda National Super League title.

AUSTRALIA

Coolen is new coach

Rini Coolen is the new coach of Adelaide United. He replaces Aurelio Vidmar, who has taken up a post with the Australian national team.

CHINA

A Korean first

Former South Korea national and Olympic coach Park

Adelaide appointment...Coolen

BENIN

BENIN – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
ASPAC	26	12	9	5	40	19	45
Buffles	26	12	8	6	28	19	44
Krake	26	12	7	7	27	22	43
Tonnerre	26	8	14	4	23	14	38
Dragons	26	9	11	6	32	25	38
Requins	26	10	5	11	43	41	35
Mambas Noirs	26	9	8	9	23	27	35
Pantheres	26	8	10	8	22	21	34
Avrankou	26	9	6	11	21	26	33
Mogas	26	8	8	10	27	26	32
Dynamo A	26	5	13	8	14	24	28
Soleil	26	8	4	14	23	35	28
Dynamo P (R)	26	6	8	12	17	28	26
Espoir (R)	26	5	11	10	20	33	26

Promoted: *CIFAS-Benin, Cavaliers de Nikki*

BOTSWANA

BOTSWANA – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
T'ship Rollers	30	25	3	2	83	23	78
Centre Chiefs	30	19	8	3	70	35	65
UF Santos	30	19	3	8	74	48	60
E Gunners	30	17	7	6	56	31	58
City Greens	30	15	5	10	61	51	50
Defence Force	30	12	7	11	35	33	43
Gaborone	30	11	9	10	43	44	42
Notwane	30	9	9	12	47	52	36
Nico	30	10	3	17	34	50	33
TAFIC	30	8	8	14	32	47	32
Police	30	7	9	14	25	34	30
Motlakase	30	8	5	17	37	62	29
Meat Com'ion	30	6	10	14	36	46	28
Killer Giants (R*)	30	7	7	16	31	59	28
Jwaneng (R)	30	6	9	15	31	54	27
Boteti YF (R)	30	6	8	16	38	64	26

**Relegated after play-off*

Promoted: *Miscellaneous, Black Peril, TASC*

CAMEROON

CAMEROON – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cotonsport	26	17	5	4	50	20	56
Les Astres	26	14	7	5	37	21	49
Tiko	26	13	6	7	29	21	45
Panthere	26	10	11	5	28	24	41
YOSA	26	8	12	6	26	17	36
Unisport	26	10	6	10	26	25	36
Union	26	8	10	8	33	29	34
Renaissance	26	10	4	12	23	30	34
Canon	26	8	8	10	27	25	32
U Ngaoundere	26	8	8	10	18	25	32
Sable	26	8	7	11	18	27	31
Fovu (R)	26	7	9	10	22	25	30
Matelots (R)	26	7	4	15	21	41	25
Roumde (R)	26	4	3	19	21	49	15

ETHIOPIA

ETHIOPIA – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Saint George	34	26	6	2	62	17	84
Dedebit	34	17	9	8	48	29	60
Eth'ian Coffee	34	16	8	10	52	32	56
Awassa	34	13	13	8	37	32	52
Adama	34	13	10	11	39	35	49
Defence Force	34	13	9	12	46	44	48
Harar Beer	34	10	17	7	30	25	47
Muger Cement	34	11	14	9	29	26	47
Sidama Coffee	34	11	13	10	24	31	46
Sebeta	34	12	8	14	28	31	44
Banks	34	11	9	14	48	52	42
Dire Dawa	34	10	12	12	30	42	42
Trans Ethiopia	34	9	14	11	27	36	41
Insurance	34	11	7	16	38	45	40
EEPCO	34	10	10	14	39	46	40
S'thern Police	34	9	8	17	19	40	35
M'hara Sugar	34	8	10	16	38	49	34
Meta Abo (R)	34	5	5	24	30	55	20

GAMBIA

GAMBIA – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ports Authority	22	11	7	4	18	9	40
Wallidan	22	11	4	7	23	16	37
Samger	22	7	10	5	21	17	31
Armed Forces	22	6	12	4	19	17	30
Steve Biko	22	7	8	7	13	13	29
GAMTEL	22	6	8	8	20	19	26
Bakau	22	6	8	8	16	23	26
Interior	22	4	13	5	16	16	25
Brikama	22	5	10	7	19	21	25
Real Banjul	22	6	7	9	15	21	25
Hawks (R)	22	4	12	6	11	14	24
Sea View (R)	22	5	9	8	17	22	24

LESOTHO

LESOTHO – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Matlama	30	18	9	3	48	21	63
Lioli	30	17	8	5	38	15	59
LMPS	30	17	5	8	46	32	56
LDF	30	16	7	7	41	27	55
LCS	30	15	7	8	49	31	52
Bantu	30	14	9	7	37	26	51
Likhopo	30	12	7	11	32	32	43
Linare	30	11	8	11	42	31	41
Joy	30	9	11	10	29	25	38
Mphat'sane	30	7	15	8	28	25	36
Swallows	30	10	5	15	32	46	35
Lerotholi Poly	30	8	10	12	29	33	34
Majantja (R)	30	9	6	15	39	47	33
Nyenye (R)	30	7	8	15	24	39	29
Rovers* (R)	30	5	7	18	24	50	19
BB Roses (R)	30	2	4	24	17	78	10

**3pts deducted for crowd trouble*

LIBYA

LIBYA – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Ittihad	25	15	6	4	45	27	51
Al Ahli B*	25	14	4	7	39	27	45
Khaleej Surt	25	13	5	7	47	31	44
Al Madina	25	8	13	4	31	27	37
Al Akhdar	25	9	8	8	29	30	35
Al Nasr	25	10	4	11	38	30	34
Al Hilal	25	9	6	10	29	33	33
Al Tirsana	25	8	6	11	33	36	30
Al Swihli	25	8	6	11	27	37	30
Al Olympique	25	7	8	10	33	36	29
Al Shat	25	8	5	12	25	36	29
Al Najma (R)	25	8	4	13	23	31	28
Al Tahaddi (R)	25	4	5	16	21	49	17
Al Ahli T** (R)	13	6	4	3	20	10	22

**1pt deducted after abandonment of home game against Al Ittihad*

***Al Ahli Tripoli expelled from league and placed bottom in the standings after failing to show up for two consecutive games; all results from the second half of their campaign were expunged*

Promoted: *Darnes, Al Wahda*

MALAWI

MALAWI – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Silver Strikers	28	18	5	5	56	18	59
Escom	28	15	13	0	44	12	58
MTL	28	14	11	3	39	22	53
CIVO	28	14	6	8	43	22	48
Tigers	28	14	6	8	42	29	48
Bullets	28	13	7	8	38	27	46
Red Lions	28	12	7	9	37	25	43
Moyale	28	10	10	8	36	37	40
Eagle Strikers	28	9	9	10	33	30	36
Blue Eagles	28	8	11	9	25	23	35
Blackpool	28	9	7	12	36	36	34
Zomba	28	9	3	16	31	43	30
EPAC (R)	28	6	4	18	23	38	22
Dwangwa (R)	28	6	4	18	25	55	22
Nkhata Bay (R)	28	1	1	26	13	104	4

NAMIBIA

NAMIBIA – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
African Stars	22	12	8	2	31	13	44
Orl'do Pirates	22	12	6	4	37	24	42
Black Africa	22	10	7	5	43	24	37
Africa Tigers	22	10	7	5	21	14	37
Eleven Arrows	22	9	7	6	19	15	34
Blue Waters	22	9	6	7	27	23	33
SK Windhoek	22	8	5	9	31	35	29
Civics	22	8	4	10	42	31	28
Oshakati	22	6	6	10	23	39	24
Ramblers	22	4	8	10	23	37	20
Hotspurs (R)	22	4	4	14	24	35	16
Utd Stars (R)	22	3	6	13	28	59	15

RWANDA

RWANDA – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
APR	22	17	3	2	48	19	54
Atraco	22	13	4	5	35	23	43
Etincelles	22	12	6	4	27	21	42
Rayon Sport	22	11	5	6	33	21	38
Kiyovu	22	10	6	6	25	19	36
Police	22	8	6	8	34	28	30
Electrogaz	22	8	6	8	30	31	30
Mukura	22	7	2	13	20	30	23
Amagaju	22	4	7	11	21	27	19
AS Kigali	22	4	7	11	21	35	19
Marines (R)	22	5	3	14	22	43	18
Musanze (R)	22	2	7	13	13	32	13

SWAZILAND

SWAZILAND – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Y Buffaloes	22	14	5	3	29	15	47
M Swallows	22	14	4	4	33	17	46
M Chiefs	22	12	5	5	26	14	41
Green Mamba	22	12	4	6	33	23	40
R Leopards	22	11	4	7	35	27	37
M Wanderers	22	9	3	10	25	26	30
Umbelebele	22	9	2	11	27	30	29
M Highlanders	22	7	7	8	18	19	28
Mhlam'yatsi	22	6	5	11	22	28	23
M Pirates	22	5	6	11	15	26	21
H Sundowns	22	4	3	15	16	34	15
11 Men (R)	22	3	4	15	16	36	13

TANZANIA

TANZANIA – FINAL	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Simba	22	20	2	0	50	12	62
Young Africans	22	15	4	3	46	18	49
Azam	22	8	9	5	30	23	33
Mtibwa Sugar	22	9	6	7	24	23	33
African Lyon	22	6	7	9	22	24	25
Ruvu Stars	22	6	7	9	26	29	25
Kagera Sugar	22	5	9	8	13	20	24
Maji Maji	22	6	6	10	14	27	24
Toto African	22	6	5	11	25	36	23
Manyema (R)	22	6	5	11	19	36	23
Prisons (R)	22	5	6	11	19	28	21
Moro (R)	22	4	6	12	19	31	18

ASIA

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Quarter-finals draw

Al Hilal (Sau) v Al Gharafa (Qat)
Chonbuk Motors (SKo) v Al Shabab (Sau)
Seongnam Ilhwa (SKo) v Suwon Bluewings (SKo)
Zob-Ahan (Irn) v Pohang Steelers (SKo)

1st legs - September 15; 2nd legs - September 22

AFC CUP

Quarter-finals draw

Al Ittihad (Syr) v Kazma (Kuw)
Al Karamah (Syr) v Muangthong United (Tha)
Al Riffa (Bhn) v Da Nang (Vie)
Thai Port (Tha) v Al Qadsia (Kuw)

1st legs - September 14; 2nd legs - September 21

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Seong-Hwa has taken charge of Dalian Shide.

"Dalian Shide hired a Korean coach for the first time because we think Koreans are more familiar with Chinese football," said the club.

JORDAN

Croat for Al Wahdat

Last season's league runners-up Al Wahdat have appointed Dragan Talajic as their new coach. The Croat steered Saudi Arabia's Al Ittihad to the AFC Champions League in 2004.

QATAR

Kone signs deal

Marseille's Ivory Coast striker Bakari Kone has signed a two-year deal to play for Qatari club Lakhwiya. The 28-year-old joined OM from Nice for £7.9million in 2008.

SAUDI ARABIA

Al Shabab change again

Daniel Carreno is the new coach of Al Shabab. The 47-year-old Uruguayan succeeds Brazil's Edgar Ferreira, who stepped in following the dismissal of Portuguese boss Jaime Pacheco in April.

Meanwhile, Norwegian coach Trond Sollied has taken charge of Al Ahli following the departure of Sergio Farias to UAE side Al Wasl.

UAE

O'Leary gets new job

Former Leeds United and Aston Villa manager David O'Leary is the new coach of Al Ahli. Among those he will take charge of in Dubai will be Fabio Cannavaro, who signed a two-year deal with the club after leaving Juventus.

Fresh start...O'Leary

BAHRAIN

BAHRAIN – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Ahli	18	13	2	3	26	17	41
Muharraq	18	13	1	4	38	20	40
Al Riffa	18	12	2	4	36	18	38
Al Najma	18	10	2	6	27	18	32
Busaiteen	18	6	5	7	29	23	23
Manama	18	4	6	8	23	33	18
Al Shabab	18	5	2	11	18	35	17
Al Hala	18	4	4	10	27	30	16
Malikiya	18	4	4	10	18	31	16
East Riffa (R)	18	3	4	11	21	38	13

HONG KONG

HONG KONG – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South China	18	12	4	2	49	22	40
Pegasus	18	10	5	3	33	21	35
Kitchee	18	8	7	3	34	18	31
Citizen	18	6	8	4	29	16	26
Sun Hei	18	7	3	8	38	27	24
Wofoo Tai Po	18	6	5	7	25	27	23
Fourway	18	4	7	7	19	28	19
Tai Chung	18	4	7	7	15	25	19
Shatin	18	2	7	9	18	35	13
Happy Valley	18	2	5	11	17	58	11

Tuen Mun expelled from league; all results expunged

INDIA

INDIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dempo	26	16	6	4	54	31	54
Churchill Bros	26	11	10	5	51	35	43
Pune	26	10	12	4	38	23	42
Mahindra	26	10	11	5	45	29	41
Mohun Bagan	26	10	6	10	48	43	36
Salgaocar	26	8	9	9	34	38	33
JCT Mills	26	8	8	10	26	29	32
Chirag	26	8	8	10	33	39	32
East Bengal	26	7	10	9	27	31	31
Viva Kerala	26	7	9	10	25	36	30
Mumbai	26	6	11	9	24	26	29
Air India	26	7	7	12	28	47	28
Sporting (R)	26	6	9	11	30	40	27
Shillong L (R)	26	6	8	12	23	39	26

Promoted: *ONGC, Hindustan Aeronautics*

INDONESIA

INDONESIA – FINAL*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arema	34	23	4	7	57	22	73
Persipura	34	18	13	3	62	32	67
Persiba	34	15	9	10	44	31	54
Persib Maung	34	16	5	13	50	36	53
Persija	34	14	10	10	41	36	52
Persiwa	34	15	5	14	57	56	50
PSPS	34	14	7	13	43	37	49
Sriwijaya	34	14	6	14	48	49	48
Persijap	34	13	7	14	40	45	46
Persema	34	13	6	15	43	52	45
Bontang	34	12	8	14	53	52	44
Persisam Putra	34	12	8	14	38	41	44
PSM	34	12	7	15	31	46	43
Persela	34	12	6	16	45	55	42
Pelita JJB	34	10	9	15	42	53	39
Persebaya	33	10	6	17	42	55	36
Persik	33	9	9	15	38	55	36
Persitara (R)	34	7	7	20	36	57	28

**Pending decision on result of suspended Persebaya v Persik game*

JAPAN

JAPAN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shimizu	12	7	4	1	23	12	25
Nagoya	12	7	1	4	18	14	22
Kashima	11	6	3	2	19	10	21
Urawa	12	6	2	4	18	14	20
Kawasaki	11	6	2	3	22	20	20
Yokohama	12	5	3	4	18	13	18
Albirex	12	4	5	3	14	13	17
Cerezo	11	4	4	3	13	13	16
Sanfrecce	11	4	4	3	12	12	16
Jubilo	12	4	3	5	14	17	15
Gamba	11	3	5	3	21	18	14
Tokyo	12	3	5	4	12	11	14
Montedio	12	4	2	6	11	18	14
Vegalta	12	3	4	5	13	17	13
Vissel	12	3	2	7	12	17	11
Omiya	11	2	3	6	9	14	9
Kyoto	11	2	3	6	14	22	9
Shonan	11	2	3	6	12	20	9

Standings on July 6

JORDAN

JORDAN – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Faysali	22	17	2	3	43	16	53
Al Wahdat	22	16	4	2	39	11	52
Shabab Al 0	22	12	8	2	35	20	44
Al Hussein	22	7	8	7	29	24	29
Kfarsoum	22	8	5	9	25	35	29
Al Buq'aa	22	6	8	8	22	24	26
Al Jazeera	22	7	5	10	27	30	26
Al Ramtha	22	6	7	9	31	36	25
Al Yarmouk	22	5	7	10	21	29	22
Al Arabi	22	6	3	13	31	42	21
Al Karmel (R)	22	5	3	14	21	41	18
Al Ittihad (R)	22	3	8	11	15	31	17

KUWAIT

KUWAIT – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Qadsia	21	15	3	3	49	14	48
Kuwait SC	21	14	4	3	42	16	46
Al Nasr	21	12	5	4	29	21	41
Kazma	21	11	4	6	40	26	37
Al Arabi	21	7	9	5	31	17	30
Salmiya	21	5	5	11	24	44	20
Tadamon (R*)	21	2	2	17	13	45	8
Solay'hat (R)	21	2	0	19	15	60	6

**Relegated after play-off*

Promoted: *Al Sahel, Jahra*

LEBANON

LEBANON – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Ahed	22	17	5	0	49	11	56
Al Nijmeh	22	14	3	5	48	21	45
Safa	22	13	6	3	42	20	45
Al Ansar	22	12	8	2	33	14	44
Racing	22	7	8	7	21	21	29
Al Mabarra	22	8	5	9	33	37	29
S Al Sahel	22	6	7	9	20	35	25
Al Tadamon	22	7	3	12	21	28	24
Al Islah	22	5	5	12	23	37	20
S Al Ghazieh	22	4	6	12	20	37	18
Al Ahli (R)	22	4	5	13	12	34	17
Al Hikma (R)	22	2	5	15	18	45	11

OMAN

OMAN – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Suwaiq	22	13	5	4	30	18	44
Dhofar	22	12	5	5	33	26	41
Al Nahda	22	12	4	6	29	21	40
Muscat	22	7	9	6	26	22	30
Al Taliya	22	7	6	9	21	28	27
Saham	22	7	6	9	19	26	27
Al Nasr	22	6	8	8	25	27	26
Al Shabab	22	7	4	11	30	25	25
Omani	22	6	7	9	27	29	25
Al Arouba	22	6	7	9	18	22	25
Khabourah (R)	22	5	9	8	20	27	24
Seeb (R)	22	6	6	10	19	26	24

Promoted: *Al Itihad, Ahli/Sidab*

QATAR

QATAR – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Gharafa	22	16	5	1	55	16	53
Al Sadd	22	15	5	2	55	22	50
Al Arabi	22	12	4	6	52	30	40
Qatar SC	22	11	5	6	32	23	38
Al Rayyan	22	11	4	7	41	30	37
Al Khritiyat	22	8	5	9	23	36	29
Umm Salal	22	7	7	8	27	30	28
Al Wakra	22	8	3	11	44	44	27
Khor	22	5	5	12	21	30	20
Al Ahli	22	6	2	14	31	53	20
Al Siliya	22	4	7	11	16	28	19
Shamal (R)	22	2	2	18	17	72	8

SOUTH KOREA

SOUTH KOREA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ulsan	12	7	3	2	17	14	24
Jeju	11	6	4	1	17	9	22
Seongnam	11	6	3	2	24	10	21
Seoul	11	7	0	4	22	11	21
Gyeongnam	11	6	3	2	16	9	21
Incheon	12	6	1	5	18	17	19
Busan	11	5	3	3	15	10	18
Chonbuk	10	4	4	2	18	15	16
Gwangju	11	3	4	4	10	14	13
Chunnam	11	3	2	6	17	22	11
Daejeon	11	2	4	5	9	18	10
Pohang	11	2	3	6	14	23	9
Gangwon	12	2	3	7	13	23	9
Daegu	10	2	2	6	12	17	8
Suwon	11	2	1	8	12	22	7

Standings on July 6

SYRIA

SYRIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Jaish	26	18	4	4	56	22	58
Al Karama	26	16	8	2	40	16	56
Teshrin	26	14	6	6	36	23	48
Al Ittihad	26	13	6	7	40	29	45
Al Wathba	26	12	7	7	35	27	43
Al Shorta	26	11	7	8	34	26	40
Al Majd	26	11	7	8	36	29	40
Umayya	26	9	9	8	32	36	36
Al Taliya	26	10	5	11	36	34	35
Al Wahda	26	6	9	11	32	43	27
Al Nwa'ir	26	4	10	12	20	34	22
Al Jazira	26	3	10	13	24	44	19
Jabala (R)	26	4	6	16	19	42	18
Efrin (R)	26	1	6	19	16	51	9

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Wahda	22	19	1	2	45	15	58
Al Jazeera	22	15	6	1	48	26	51
Al Ain	22	14	3	5	57	29	45
Bani Yas	22	10	6	6	44	37	36
Al Wasl	22	8	5	9	41	40	29
Sharjah	22	7	7	8	37	36	28
Al Shabab	22	8	4	10	35	44	28
Al Ahli	22	7	5	10	42	43	26
Dhafra	22	7	5	10	47	55	26
Al Nasr	22	7	2	13	37	49	23
Emirates (R)	22	4	2	16	37	57	14
Ajman (R)	22	2	2	18	29	68	8

Promoted: *Al Ittihad, Dubai, Dibba, Thaid*

YEMEN

YEMEN – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Al Saqr	26	16	4	6	43	23	52
Al Tilal	26	14	5	7	43	26	47
Al Shabab	26	14	2	10	31	23	44
Al Ahli S	26	12	7	7	29	23	43
Al Ahli T	26	13	2	11	34	32	41
Al Urooba	26	12	3	11	36	30	39
Al Wahda S	26	9	10	7	28	24	37
Al Ittihad	26	9	9	8	22	25	36
Al Shaab	26	8	7	11	29	30	31
Al Hilal	26	9	4	13	26	31	31
Shula (R)	26	7	9	10	25	39	30
Al Wahda A (R)	26	8	4	14	23	39	28
Salam (R)	26	5	12	9	27	33	27
Yarmuk (R)	26	4	6	16	26	44	18

OCEANIA

NEW ZEALAND

Championship play-offs

Final

Apr 24 - Waitakere City

Waitakere United 3 (Totori 34, 73, Pearce 57)
Canterbury United 1 (Lancaster 6)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 1,535. **Ref:** Cross
Sent off: Dirou (Canterbury) 37min

FORTHCOMING FIXTURES

August 11
Libertadores Cup Final, first leg
August 14
Premier League starts
August 18
Libertadores Cup Final, second leg
August 27
UEFA Super Cup: Internazionale v Atletico Madrid
August 28
La Liga starts

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WORLD CUP 2010 SQUADS

ALGERIA

GOALKEEPERS		
16 Faouzi CHAOUCHI	05.12.84	ES Setif
1 Lounes GAOUAOUI	28.09.77	ASO Chlef
23 Rais M'BOLHI	25.04.86	Slavia Sofia (Bul)
DEFENDERS		
3 Nadir BELHADJ	18.06.82	Portsmouth (Eng)
12 Habib BELLAID	28.03.86	E Frankfurt (Ger)
2 Madjid BOUGHERRA	07.10.82	Rangers (Sco)
5 Rafik HALLICHE	02.09.86	Benfica (Por)
14 Abdelkader LAIFAOUI	29.07.81	ES Setif
18 Carl MEDJANI	15.05.85	Ajaccio (Fra)
20 Djamel MESBAH	09.10.84	Lecce (Ita)
4 Antar YAHIA	21.03.82	Bochum (Ger)
MIDFIELDERS		
22 Djamal ABDOUN	14.02.86	Nantes (Fra)
7 Ryad BOUDEBOUZ	19.02.90	Sochaux (Fra)
17 Adlene GUEDIOURA	12.11.85	Wolves (Eng)
21 Foued KADIR	05.12.83	Valenciennes (Fra)
8 Medhi LACEN	15.05.84	R Santander (Spa)
6 Yazid MANSOURI	25.02.78	Lorient (Fra)
13 Karim MATMOUR	25.06.85	B M'gladbach (Ger)
19 Hassan YEBDA	14.05.84	Benfica (Por)
15 Karim ZIANI	17.08.82	Wolfsburg (Ger)
FORWARDS		
11 Rafik DJEBBOUR	08.03.84	AEK Athens (Gre)
9 Abdelkader GHEZZAL	05.12.84	Siena (Ita)
10 Rafik SAIFI	07.02.75	Al Khor (Qat)
COACH		
Rabah SAADANE	03.05.46	

ARGENTINA

GOALKEEPERS		
21 Mariano ANDUJAR	30.07.83	Catania (Ita)
1 Diego POZO	16.02.78	Colon
22 Sergio ROMERO	22.02.87	AZ Alkmaar (Hol)
DEFENDERS		
4 Nicolas BURDISSO	12.04.81	Internazionale (Ita)
2 Martin DEMICHELIS	20.12.80	Bayern Munich (Ger)
12 Ariel GARCE	14.07.79	Colon
6 Gabriel HEINZE	19.04.78	Marseille (Fra)
15 Nicolas OTAMENDI	12.02.88	Velez Sarsfield
3 Clemente RODRIGUEZ	31.07.81	Estudiantes
13 Walter SAMUEL	23.03.78	Internazionale (Ita)
MIDFIELDERS		
5 Mario BOLATTI	17.02.85	Fiorentina (Ita)
7 Angel DI MARIA	14.02.88	Benfica (Por)
17 Jonas GUTIERREZ	05.07.83	Newcastle Utd (Eng)
14 Javier MASCHERANO	08.06.84	Liverpool (Eng)
23 Javier PASTORE	20.06.89	Palermo (Ita)
20 Maxi RODRIGUEZ	02.01.81	Liverpool (Eng)
8 Juan Sebastian VERON	09.03.75	Estudiantes
FORWARDS		
16 Sergio AGUERO	02.06.88	At Madrid (Spa)
9 Gonzalo HIGUAIN	10.12.87	Real Madrid (Spa)
10 Lionel MESSI	24.06.87	Barcelona (Spa)
19 Diego MILITO	12.06.79	Internazionale (Ita)
18 Martin PALERMO	07.11.73	Boca Juniors
11 Carlos TEVEZ	05.02.84	Man City (Eng)
COACH		
Diego MARADONA	30.10.60	

AUSTRALIA

GOALKEEPERS		
12 Adam FEDERICI	31.01.85	Reading (Eng)
18 Eugene GALEKOVIC	12.06.81	Adelaide United
1 Mark SCHWARZER	06.10.72	Fulham (Eng)
DEFENDERS		
6 Michael BEAUCHAMP	08.03.81	Melbourne Heart
21 David CARNEY	30.11.83	Twente (Hol)
11 Scott CHIPPERFIELD	30.12.75	Basle (Swi)
20 Mark MILLIGAN	04.08.85	JEF United (Jap)
3 Craig MOORE	12.12.75	no club affiliation
2 Lucas NEILL	09.03.78	Galatasaray (Tur)
8 Luke WILKSHIRE	02.10.81	Dynamo Moscow (Rus)
MIDFIELDERS		
5 Jason CULINA	05.08.80	Gold Coast United
7 Brett EMERTON	22.02.79	Blackburn (Eng)
13 Vince GRELLA	05.10.79	Blackburn (Eng)
15 Mile JEDINAK	03.08.84	Genclerbirligi (Tur)
16 Carl VALERI	14.08.84	Sassuolo (Ita)
22 Dario VIDOSIC	08.04.87	Nurnberg (Ger)
FORWARDS		
23 Marco BRESCIANO	11.02.80	Palermo (Ita)
4 Tim CAHILL	06.12.79	Everton (Eng)
19 Richard GARCIA	04.09.81	Hull City (Eng)
14 Brett HOLMAN	27.03.84	AZ Alkmaar (Hol)
9 Joshua KENNEDY	20.08.82	Nagoya Grampus (Jap)
10 Harry KEWELL	22.09.78	Galatasaray (Tur)
17 Nikita RUKAVYTSYA	22.06.87	Twente (Hol)
COACH		
Pim VERBEEK (Hol)	12.03.56	

BRAZIL

GOALKEEPERS		
22 DONI	22.10.79	Roma (Ita)
12 Heurelho GOMES	15.02.81	Tottenham (Eng)
1 JULIO CESAR	03.09.79	Internazionale (Ita)
DEFENDERS		
13 DANI ALVES	06.05.83	Barcelona (Spa)
16 GILBERTO	25.04.76	Cruzeiro
4 JUAN	01.02.79	Roma (Ita)
3 LUCIO	08.05.78	Internazionale (Ita)
14 LUISAO	13.02.81	Benfica (Por)
2 MAICON	26.07.81	Internazionale (Ita)
6 MICHEL BASTOS	02.08.83	Lyon (Fra)
15 THIAGO SILVA	22.09.84	Milan (Ita)
MIDFIELDERS		
7 ELANO	14.06.81	Galatasaray (Tur)
5 FELIPE MELO	26.06.83	Juventus (Ita)
8 GILBERTO SILVA	07.10.76	Panathinaikos (Gre)
17 JOSUE	19.07.79	Wolfsburg (Ger)
19 JULIO BAPTISTA	01.10.81	Roma (Ita)
10 KAKA	22.04.82	Real Madrid (Spa)
20 KLEBERSON	19.06.79	Flamengo
18 RAMIRES	24.03.87	Benfica (Por)
FORWARDS		
23 GRAFITE	02.04.79	Wolfsburg (Ger)
9 LUIS FABIANO	08.11.80	Sevilla (Spa)
21 NILMAR	14.07.84	Villarreal (Spa)
11 ROBINHO	25.01.84	Santos
COACH		
DUNGA	31.10.63	

CAMEROON

GOALKEEPERS		
16 Souleymanou HAMIDOU	22.11.73	Kayserispor (Tur)
1 Carlos KAMENI	18.02.84	Espanyol (Spa)
22 Guy N'DY ASSEMBE	28.02.86	Nantes (Fra)
DEFENDERS		
2 Benoit ASSOU-EKOTTO	24.03.84	Tottenham (Eng)
5 Sebastien BASSONG	09.07.86	Tottenham (Eng)
12 Gaetan BONG	25.04.88	Valenciennes (Fra)
14 Aurelien CHEDJOU	20.06.85	Lille (Fra)
8 GEREMI	20.12.78	Ankaragucu (Tur)
19 Stephane MBIA	20.05.86	Marseille (Fra)
3 Nicolas N'KOULOU	27.03.90	Monaco (Fra)
4 Rigobert SONG	01.07.76	Trabzonspor (Tur)
MIDFIELDERS		
18 Eyong ENOH	23.03.86	Ajax (Hol)
11 Jean MAKOUN	29.05.83	Lyon (Fra)
20 Georges MANDJECK	09.12.88	Stuttgart (Ger)
21 Joel MATIP	08.08.91	Schalke (Ger)
7 Landry N'GUEMO	28.11.85	Nancy (Fra)
6 Alexandre SONG	09.09.87	Arsenal (Eng)
FORWARDS		
23 Vincent ABOUBAKAR	22.01.92	Valenciennes (Fra)
13 Eric CHOUPO-MOTING	23.03.89	Hamburg (Ger)
10 Achille EMANA	05.06.82	Real Betis (Spa)
9 Samuel ETO'O	10.03.81	Internazionale (Ita)
17 Mohammadou IDRISSOU	08.03.80	Freiburg (Ger)
15 Pierre WEBO	20.01.82	Mallorca (Spa)
COACH		
Paul LE GUEN (Fra)	01.03.64	

CHILE

GOALKEEPERS		
1 Claudio BRAVO	13.04.83	Real Sociedad (Spa)
12 Miguel PINTO	04.07.83	Universidad Catolica
23 Luis MARIN	18.05.83	Union Espanola
DEFENDERS		
5 Pablo CONTRERAS	11.09.78	PAOK (Gre)
2 Ismael FUENTES	04.08.81	Universidad Catolica
4 Mauricio ISLA	12.06.88	Udinese (Ita)
18 Gonzalo JARA	29.08.85	West Brom (Eng)
17 Gary MEDEL	03.08.87	Boca Juniors (Arg)
3 Waldo PONCE	04.12.82	Universidad Catolica
MIDFIELDERS		
6 Carlos CARMONA	21.02.87	Reggina (Ita)
13 Marco ESTRADA	28.05.83	Universidad Catolica
14 Matias FERNANDEZ	15.05.86	Sporting Lisbon (Por)
19 Gonzalo FIERRO	21.03.83	Flamengo (Bra)
20 Rodrigo MILLAR	03.11.81	Colo Colo
21 Rodrigo TELLO	14.10.79	Besiktas (Tur)
10 Jorge VALDIVIA	19.10.83	Al Ain (UAE)
8 Arturo VIDAL	22.05.87	Bayer Leverkusen (Ger)
FORWARDS		
15 Jean BEAUSEJOUR	01.06.84	America (Mex)
11 Mark GONZALEZ	10.07.84	CSKA Moscow (Rus)
16 Fabian ORELLANA	27.01.86	Udinese (Ita)
22 Esteban PAREDES	01.08.80	Colo Colo
7 Alexis SANCHEZ	19.12.88	Udinese (Ita)
9 Humberto SUAZO	10.05.81	Monterrey (Mex)
COACH		
Marcelo BIELSA (Arg)	21.07.55	

DENMARK

GOALKEEPERS		
16 Stephan ANDERSEN	26.11.81	Brondby
22 Jesper CHRISTIANSEN	24.04.78	Copenhagen
1 Thomas SORENSEN	12.06.76	Stoke City (Eng)
DEFENDERS		
4 Daniel AGGER	12.12.84	Liverpool (Eng)
6 Lars JACOBSEN	20.09.79	Blackburn (Eng)
3 Simon KJAER	26.03.89	Palermo (Ita)
13 Per KROLDRUP	31.07.79	Fiorentina (Ita)
23 Patrick MTILIGA	28.01.81	Malaga (Spa)
15 Simon POULSEN	07.10.84	AZ Alkmaar (Hol)
MIDFIELDERS		
20 Thomas ENEVOLDSEN	27.07.87	Groningen (Hol)
21 Christian ERIKSEN	14.02.92	Ajax (Hol)
7 Daniel JENSEN	25.06.79	W Bremen (Ger)
10 Martin JORGENSEN	06.10.75	AGF Aarhus
12 Thomas KAHLENBERG	20.03.83	Wolfsburg (Ger)
5 William KVIST	24.02.85	Copenhagen
2 Christian POULSEN	28.02.80	Juventus (Ita)
14 Jakob POULSEN	07.07.83	AGF Aarhus
FORWARDS		
17 Mikkel BECKMANN	24.10.83	Randers
11 Nicklas BENDTNER	16.01.88	Arsenal (Eng)
8 Jesper GRONKJAER	12.08.77	Copenhagen
18 Soren LARSEN	06.09.81	Toulouse (Fra)
19 Dennis ROMMEDAHL	22.07.78	Ajax (Hol)
9 Jon Dahl TOMASSON	29.08.76	Feyenoord (Hol)
COACH		
Morten OLSEN	14.08.49	

ENGLAND

GOALKEEPERS		
12 Robert GREEN	18.01.80	West Ham United
23 Joe HART	19.04.87	Manchester City
1 David JAMES	01.08.70	Portsmouth
DEFENDERS		
18 Jamie CARRAGHER	28.01.78	Liverpool
3 Ashley COLE	20.12.80	Chelsea
5 Michael DAWSON	18.11.83	Tottenham Hotspur
2 Glen JOHNSON	23.08.84	Liverpool
20 Ledley KING	12.10.80	Tottenham Hotspur
6 John TERRY	07.12.80	Chelsea
15 Matthew UPSON	18.04.79	West Ham United
13 Stephen WARNOCK	12.12.81	Aston Villa
MIDFIELDERS		
14 Gareth BARRY	23.02.81	Manchester City
22 Michael CARRICK	28.07.81	Manchester United
11 Joe COLE	08.11.81	Chelsea
4 Steven GERRARD	30.05.80	Liverpool
8 Frank LAMPARD	20.06.78	Chelsea
7 Aaron LENNON	16.04.87	Tottenham Hotspur
16 James MILNER	04.01.86	Aston Villa
17 Shaun WRIGHT-PHILLIPS	25.10.81	Manchester City
FORWARDS		
9 Peter CROUCH	30.01.81	Tottenham Hotspur
19 Jermain DEFOE	07.10.82	Tottenham Hotspur
21 Emile HESKEY	11.01.78	Aston Villa
10 Wayne ROONEY	24.10.85	Manchester United
COACH		
Fabio CAPELLO (Ita)	18.06.46	

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FRANCE

GOALKEEPERS		
23 Cedric CARRASSO	30.12.81	Bordeaux
1 Hugo LLORIS	26.12.86	Lyon
16 Steve MANDANDA	28.03.85	Marseille
DEFENDERS		
3 Eric ABIDAL	11.09.79	Barcelona (Spa)
22 Gael CLICHY	26.07.85	Arsenal (Eng)
13 Patrice EVRA	15.05.81	Man United (Eng)
5 William GALLAS	17.08.77	Arsenal (Eng)
6 Marc PLANUS	07.03.82	Bordeaux
4 Anthony REVEILLERE	10.11.79	Lyon
2 Bacary SAGNA	14.02.83	Arsenal (Eng)
17 Sebastien SQUILLACI	11.08.80	Sevilla (Spa)
MIDFIELDERS		
19 Abou DIABY	11.05.86	Arsenal (Eng)
18 Alou DIARRA	15.07.81	Bordeaux
8 Yoann GOURCUFF	11.07.86	Bordeaux
15 Florent MALOUDA	13.06.80	Chelsea (Eng)
14 Jeremy TOULALAN	10.09.83	Lyon
20 Mathieu VALBUENA	28.09.84	Marseille
FORWARDS		
21 Nicolas ANELKA	14.03.79	Chelsea (Eng)
9 Djibril CISSE	12.08.81	Panathinaikos (Gre)
11 Andre-Pierre GIGNAC	05.12.85	Toulouse
10 Sidney GOVOU	27.07.79	Lyon
12 Thierry HENRY	17.08.77	Barcelona (Spa)
7 Franck RIBERY	07.04.83	Bayern Munich (Ger)
COACH		
Raymond DOMENECH	24.01.52	

GERMANY

GOALKEEPERS		
1 Manuel NEUER	27.03.86	Schalke
12 Tim WIESE	17.12.81	Werder Bremen
22 Hans-Jorg BUTT	28.05.74	Bayern Munich
DEFENDERS		
4 Dennis AOGO	14.01.87	Hamburg
14 Holger BADSTUBER	13.03.89	Bayern Munich
20 Jerome BOATENG	03.09.88	Hamburg
3 Arne FRIEDRICH	29.05.79	Hertha Berlin
2 Marcell JANSEN	04.11.85	Hamburg
16 Philipp LAHM	11.11.83	Bayern Munich
17 Per MERTESACKER	29.09.84	Werder Bremen
5 Serdar TASCI	24.04.87	Stuttgart
MIDFIELDERS		
6 Sami KHEDIRA	04.04.87	Stuttgart
18 Toni KROOS	04.01.90	Bayern Munich
21 Marko MARIN	13.03.89	Werder Bremen
13 Thomas MULLER	13.09.89	Bayern Munich
8 Mesut OZIL	15.10.88	Werder Bremen
7 Bastian SCHWEINSTEIGER	01.08.84	Bayern Munich
15 Piotr TROCHOWSKI	22.03.84	Hamburg
FORWARDS		
19 CACAU	27.03.81	Stuttgart
23 Mario GOMEZ	10.07.85	Bayern Munich
9 Stefan KIESSLING	25.01.84	Bayer Leverkusen
11 Miroslav KLOSE	09.06.78	Bayern Munich
10 Lukas PODOLSKI	04.06.85	Koln
COACH		
Joachim LOW	03.02.60	

GHANA

GOALKEEPERS		
1 Daniel AGYEI	10.11.89	Liberty
16 Stephen AHORLU	05.09.88	Heart of Lions
22 Richard KINGSON	13.06.78	Wigan Athletic (Eng)
DEFENDERS		
19 Lee ADDY	07.07.90	Bechem Chelsea
17 Ibrahim AYEW	16.04.88	Zamalek (Egy)
7 Samuel INKOOM	01.06.89	Basle (Swi)
5 John MENSAH	29.11.82	Lyon (Fra)
8 Jonathan MENSAH	13.07.90	Free State Stars (SAf)
4 John PAINTSIL	15.06.81	Fulham (Eng)
2 Hans SARPEI	28.06.76	B Leverkusen (Ger)
15 Isaac VORSAH	21.06.88	Hoffenheim (Ger)
MIDFIELDERS		
6 Anthony ANNAN	21.07.86	Rosenborg (Nor)
10 Stephen APPIAH	24.12.80	Bologna (Ita)
21 Kwadwo ASAMOAH	09.12.88	Udinese (Ita)
13 Andre AYEW	17.12.89	Marseille (Fra)
9 Derek BOATENG	02.05.83	Getafe (Spa)
11 Sulley MUNTARI	27.08.84	Internazionale (Ita)
FORWARDS		
18 Dominic ADIYIAH	29.11.89	Milan (Ita)
14 Matthew AMOAH	24.10.80	NAC Breda (Hol)
23 Kevin-Prince BOATENG	06.03.87	Portsmouth (Eng)
3 Asamoah GYAN	22.11.85	Rennes (Fra)
20 Quincy OWUSU-ABEYIE	15.04.86	Al Sadd (Qat)
12 Prince TAGOE	09.11.86	Hoffenheim (Ger)
COACH		
Milovan RAJEVAC (Ser)	02.01.54	

GREECE

GOALKEEPERS		
1 Kostas CHALKIAS	30.05.74	PAOK
13 Michalis SIFAKIS	09.09.84	Aris
12 Alexandros TZORVAS	12.08.82	Panathinaikos
DEFENDERS		
16 Sotirios KYRGIAKOS	23.07.79	Liverpool (Eng)
22 Stelios MALEZAS	11.03.85	PAOK
5 Vangelis MORAS	26.08.81	Bologna (Ita)
8 Avraam PAPADOPOULOS	03.12.84	Olympiakos
19 Sokratis PAPASTATHOPOULOS	09.06.88	Genoa (Ita)
3 Christos PATSATZOGLOU	19.03.79	Omonia (Cyp)
2 Giourkas SEITARIDIS	04.06.81	Panathinaikos
4 Nikos SPIROPOULOS	10.10.83	Panathinaikos
15 Vasilis TOROSIDIS	10.06.85	Olympiakos
11 Loukas VYNTRA	05.02.81	Panathinaikos
MIDFIELDERS		
10 Giorgos KARAGOUNIS	06.03.77	Panathinaikos
21 Kostas KATSOURANIS	21.06.79	Panathinaikos
18 Sotiris NINIS	03.04.90	Panathinaikos
23 Sakis PRITTAS	09.01.79	Aris
6 Alexandros TZIOLIS	13.02.85	Siena (Ita)
FORWARDS		
9 Angelos CHARISTEAS	09.02.80	Nurnberg (Ger)
17 Theofanis GEKAS	23.05.80	E Frankfurt (Ger)
20 Pantelis KAPETANOS	08.06.83	S Bucharest (Rom)
14 Dimitris SALPIGIDIS	18.08.81	Panathinaikos
7 Georgios SAMARAS	21.02.85	Celtic (Sco)
COACH		
Otto REHHAGEL (Ger)	09.08.38	

HOLLAND

GOALKEEPERS		
22 Sander BOSCHKER	20.10.70	Twente
1 Maarten STEKELENBURG	22.09.82	Ajax
16 Michel VORM	20.10.83	Utrecht
DEFENDERS		
12 Khalid BOULAHROUZ	28.12.81	Stuttgart (Ger)
15 Edson BRAAFHEID	08.04.83	Bayern Munich (Ger)
3 John HEITINGA	15.11.83	Everton (Eng)
4 Joris MATHIJSEN	05.04.80	Hamburg (Ger)
13 Andre OOIJER	11.07.74	PSV Eindhoven
5 Giovanni VAN BRONCKHORST	05.02.75	Feyenoord
2 Gregory VAN DER WIEL	03.02.88	Ajax
MIDFIELDERS		
20 Ibrahim AFELLAY	02.04.86	PSV Eindhoven
8 Nigel DE JONG	30.11.84	Man City (Eng)
14 Demy DE ZEEUW	26.05.83	Ajax
18 Stijn SCHAARS	11.01.84	AZ Alkmaar
10 Wesley SNEIJDER	09.06.84	Internazionale (Ita)
6 Mark VAN BOMMEL	22.04.77	Bayern Munich (Ger)
23 Rafael VAN DER VAART	11.02.83	Real Madrid (Spa)
FORWARDS		
19 Ryan BABEL	19.12.86	Liverpool (Eng)
17 Eljero ELIA	13.02.87	Hamburg (Ger)
21 Klaas-Jan HUNTELAAR	12.08.83	Milan (Ita)
7 Dirk KUYT	22.07.80	Liverpool (Eng)
11 Arjen ROBBEN	23.01.84	Bayern Munich (Ger)
9 Robin VAN PERSIE	06.08.83	Arsenal (Eng)
COACH		
Bert VAN MARWIJK	19.05.52	

HONDURAS

GOALKEEPERS		
1 Ricardo CANALES	30.05.82	Motagua
22 Donis ESCOBER	03.02.81	Olimpia
18 Noel VALLADARES	03.05.77	Olimpia
DEFENDERS		
5 Victor BERNARDEZ	24.05.82	Anderlecht (Blg)
2 Osman CHAVEZ	29.07.84	Platense
3 Maynor FIGUEROA	02.05.83	Wigan Athletic (Eng)
14 Oscar GARCIA	04.09.84	Olimpia
21 Emilio IZAGUIRRE	10.05.86	Motagua
23 Sergio MENDOZA	23.05.81	Motagua
4 Jhony PALACIOS	20.12.86	Olimpia
16 Mauricio SABILLON	11.11.78	H'zhou Greentown (Chn)
MIDFIELDERS		
17 Edgar ALVAREZ	18.01.80	Bari (Ita)
20 Amado GUEVARA	02.05.76	Motagua
7 Ramon NUNEZ	14.11.85	Olimpia
10 Jerry PALACIOS	13.05.82	H'zhou Greentown (Chn)
8 Wilson PALACIOS	29.07.84	Tottenham (Eng)
6 Hendry THOMAS	23.02.85	Wigan Athetic (Eng)
19 Danilo TURCIOS	08.05.78	Olimpia
FORWARDS		
13 Roger ESPINOZA	25.10.86	Kansas City (USA)
15 Walter MARTINEZ	24.03.82	Marathon
9 Carlos PAVON	09.10.73	Real Espana
11 David SUAZO	05.11.79	Internazionale (Ita)
12 Georgie WELCOME	09.03.85	Motagua
COACH		
Reinaldo RUEDA (Col)	16.04.57	

ITALY

GOALKEEPERS		
1 Gianluigi BUFFON	28.01.78	Juventus
14 Morgan DE SANCTIS	26.03.77	Napoli
12 Federico MARCHETTI	07.02.83	Cagliari
DEFENDERS		
13 Salvatore BOCCHETTI	30.11.86	Genoa
23 Leonardo BONUCCI	01.05.87	Bari
5 Fabio CANNAVARO	13.09.73	Juventus
4 Giorgio CHIELLINI	14.08.84	Juventus
3 Domenico CRISCITO	30.12.86	Genoa
2 Christian MAGGIO	11.02.82	Napoli
19 Gianluca ZAMBROTTA	19.02.77	Milan
MIDFIELDERS		
16 Mauro CAMORANESI	04.10.76	Juventus
6 Daniele DE ROSSI	24.07.83	Roma
8 Gennaro GATTUSO	09.01.78	Milan
15 Claudio MARCHISIO	19.01.86	Juventus
22 Riccardo MONTOLIVO	18.01.85	Fiorentina
17 Angelo PALOMBO	25.09.81	Sampdoria
7 Simone PEPE	30.08.83	Udinese
21 Andrea PIRLO	19.05.79	Milan
FORWARDS		
10 Antonio DI NATALE	13.10.77	Udinese
11 Alberto GILARDINO	05.07.82	Fiorentina
9 Vincenzo IAQUINTA	21.11.79	Juventus
20 Giampaolo PAZZINI	02.08.84	Sampdoria
18 Fabio QUAGLIARELLA	31.01.83	Napoli
COACH		
Marcello LIPPI	12.04.48	

IVORY COAST

GOALKEEPERS		
1 Boubacar BARRY	30.12.79	Lokeren (Blg)
23 Daniel YEBOAH	13.11.84	ASEC Mimosas
16 Aristide ZOGBO	30.12.81	Maccabi Netanya (Isr)
DEFENDERS		
2 Benjamin ANGOUA	28.11.86	Valenciennes (Fra)
22 Sol BAMBA	13.01.85	Hibernian (Sco)
3 Arthur BOKA	02.04.83	Stuttgart (Ger)
20 Guy DEMEL	13.06.81	Hamburg (Ger)
21 Emmanuel EBOUE	04.06.83	Arsenal (Eng)
6 Steve GOHOURI	08.02.81	Wigan Athletic (Eng)
17 Siaka TIENE	22.02.82	Valenciennes (Fra)
4 Kolo TOURE	19.03.81	Man City (Eng)
MIDFIELDERS		
12 Jean-Jacques GOSSO	15.03.83	Monaco (Fra)
14 Emmanuel KONE	31.12.86	CFR Cluj (Rom)
13 ROMARIC	04.06.83	Sevilla (Spa)
9 Cheik TIOTE	21.06.86	Twente (Hol)
19 Yaya TOURE	13.05.83	Barcelona (Spa)
5 Didier ZOKORA	14.12.80	Sevilla (Spa)
FORWARDS		
15 Aruna DINDANE	26.11.80	Lens (Fra)
7 Seydou DOUMBIA	31.12.87	Young Boys (Swi)
11 Didier DROGBA	11.03.78	Chelsea (Eng)
10 GERVINHO	27.05.87	Lille (Fra)
8 Salomon KALOU	05.08.85	Chelsea (Eng)
18 Kader KEITA	06.08.81	Galatasaray (Tur)
COACH		
Sven Goran ERIKSSON (Swe)	05.02.48	

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WORLD CUP 2010 SQUADS

JAPAN

GOALKEEPERS		
23 Yoshikatsu KAWAGUCHI	15.08.75	Jubilo Iwata
21 Eiji KAWASHIMA	20.03.83	Kawasaki Frontale
1 Seigo NARAZAKI	15.04.76	Nagoya Grampus
DEFENDERS		
13 Daiki IWAMASA	30.01.82	Kashima Antlers
3 Yuichi KOMANO	25.07.81	Jubilo Iwata
15 Yasuyuki KONNO	25.01.83	Tokyo
5 Yuto NAGATOMO	12.09.86	Tokyo
22 Yuji NAKAZAWA	25.02.78	Yokohama F Marinos
4 Marcus TULIO TANAKA	24.04.81	Nagoya Grampus
6 Atsuto UCHIDA	27.03.88	Kashima Antlers
MIDFIELDERS		
2 Yuki ABE	06.09.81	Urawa Reds
7 Yasuhito ENDO	28.01.80	Gamba Osaka
17 Makoto HASEBE	18.01.84	Wolfsburg (Ger)
18 Keisuke HONDA	13.06.86	CSKA Moscow (Rus)
20 Junichi INAMOTO	18.09.79	Kawasaki Frontale
8 Daisuke MATSUI	11.05.81	Grenoble (Fra)
14 Kengo NAKAMURA	31.10.80	Kawasaki Frontale
10 Shunsuke NAKAMURA	24.06.78	Yokohama F Marinos
FORWARDS		
19 Takayuki MORIMOTO	07.05.88	Catania (Ita)
9 Shinji OKAZAKI	16.04.86	Shimizu S-Pulse
16 Yoshito OKUBO	09.06.82	Vissel Kobe
11 Keiji TAMADA	11.04.80	Nagoya Grampus
12 Kisho YANO	05.04.84	Albirex Niigata
COACH		
Takeshi OKADA	25.08.56	

MEXICO

GOALKEEPERS		
23 Luis MICHEL	21.07.79	Guadalajara
13 Guillermo OCHOA	13.07.85	America
1 Oscar PEREZ	01.02.73	Jaguares
DEFENDERS		
12 Paul AGUILAR	06.03.86	Pachuca
16 Efrain JUAREZ	22.02.88	Pumas
19 Jonny MAGALLON	21.11.81	Guadalajara
15 Hector MORENO	17.01.88	AZ Alkmaar (Hol)
5 Ricardo OSORIO	30.03.80	Stuttgart (Ger)
2 Francisco RODRIGUEZ	20.10.81	PSV Eindhoven (Hol)
3 Carlos SALCIDO	02.04.80	PSV Eindhoven (Hol)
MIDFIELDERS		
8 Israel CASTRO	20.12.80	Pumas
18 Andres GUARDADO	28.09.86	Dep La Coruna (Spa)
4 Rafael MARQUEZ	13.02.79	Barcelona (Spa)
6 Gerardo TORRADO	30.04.79	Cruz Azul
20 Jorge TORRES	16.01.88	Atlas
FORWARDS		
7 Pablo BARRERA	21.06.87	Pumas
21 Adolfo BAUTISTA	15.05.79	Guadalajara
10 Cuauhtemoc BLANCO	17.01.73	Veracruz
17 Giovani DOS SANTOS	11.05.89	Tottenham (Eng)
9 Guillermo FRANCO	03.11.76	no club affiliation
14 Javier HERNANDEZ	01.06.88	Guadalajara
22 Alberto MEDINA	29.05.83	Guadalajara
11 Carlos VELA	01.03.89	Arsenal (Eng)
COACH		
Javier AGUIRRE	01.12.58	

NEW ZEALAND

GOALKEEPERS		
23 James BANNATYNE	30.06.75	Team Wellington
12 Glen MOSS	19.01.83	Melbourne Victory (Aus)
1 Mark PASTON	13.12.76	Wellington Phoenix
DEFENDERS		
18 Andy BOYENS	18.09.83	New York (USA)
3 Tony LOCHHEAD	12.01.82	Wellington Phoenix
6 Ryan NELSEN	18.10.77	Blackburn (Eng)
4 Winston REID	03.07.88	Midtjylland (Den)
2 Ben SIGMUND	03.02.81	Wellington Phoenix
19 Tommy SMITH	31.03.90	Ipswich Town (Eng)
5 Ivan VICELICH	03.09.76	Auckland City
MIDFIELDERS		
13 Andy BARRON	24.12.80	Team Wellington
11 Leo BERTOS	20.12.81	Wellington Phoenix
8 Tim BROWN	06.03.81	Wellington Phoenix
16 Aaron CLAPHAM	15.01.87	Canterbury United
21 Jeremy CHRISTIE	22.05.83	Tampa Bay (USA)
7 Simon ELLIOTT	10.06.74	no club affiliation
15 Michael McGLINCHEY	07.01.87	Central Coast Mariners (Aus)
17 Dave MULLIGAN	24.03.82	no club affiliation
FORWARDS		
22 Jeremy BROCKIE	07.10.87	Newcastle Jets (Aus)
14 Rory FALLON	20.03.82	Plymouth Arg (Eng)
10 Chris KILLEN	08.10.81	Middlesbrough (Eng)
9 Shane SMELTZ	29.09.81	Gold Coast United (Aus)
20 Chris WOOD	07.12.91	West Brom (Eng)
COACH		
Ricki HERBERT	10.04.61	

NIGERIA

GOALKEEPERS		
23 Dele AIYENUGBA	20.11.83	Bnei Yehuda (Isr)
16 Austin EJIDE	08.04.84	Hapoel Petah Tikva (Isr)
1 Vincent ENYEAMA	29.08.82	Hapoel Tel-Aviv (Isr)
DEFENDERS		
22 Dele ADELEYE	25.12.88	Sparta Rotterdam (Hol)
5 Rabiu AFOLABI	18.04.80	Salzburg (Aut)
21 Uwa ECHIEJILE	20.01.88	Rennes (Fra)
6 Danny SHITTU	02.09.80	Bolton (Eng)
17 Chidi ODIAH	17.12.83	CSKA Moscow (Rus)
3 Taye TAIWO	16.04.85	Marseille (Fra)
2 Joseph YOBO	06.09.80	Everton (Eng)
MIDFIELDERS		
13 AYILA Yussuf	04.11.84	Dynamo Kyiv (Ukr)
20 Dickson ETUHU	08.06.82	Fulham (Eng)
15 Lukman HARUNA	04.12.90	Monaco (Fra)
14 Sani KAITA	02.05.86	Vladikavkaz (Rus)
4 Nwankwo KANU	01.08.76	Portsmouth (Eng)
12 Kalu UCHE	15.11.82	Almeria (Spa)
FORWARDS		
10 Brown IDEYE	10.10.88	Sochaux (Fra)
9 Obafemi MARTINS	28.10.84	Wolfsburg (Ger)
18 Victor OBINNA	25.03.87	Internazionale (Ita)
11 Peter ODEMWINGIE	15.07.81	Loko Moscow (Rus)
19 Chinedu OBASI	01.06.86	Hoffenheim (Ger)
7 John UTAKA	08.01.82	Portsmouth (Eng)
8 YAKUBU Ayegbeni	22.11.82	Everton (Eng)
COACH		
Lars LAGERBACK (Swe)	16.07.48	

NORTH KOREA

GOALKEEPERS		
18 KIM Myong-gil	16.10.84	Amrokgang
20 KIM Myong-won*	15.07.83	Amrokgang
1 RI Myong-guk	09.09.86	Pyongyang City
DEFENDERS		
2 CHA Jong-hyok	25.09.85	Amrokgang
8 JI Yun-nam	20.11.76	April 25
16 NAM Song-chol	07.05.82	April 25
13 PAK Chol-jin	05.09.85	Amrokgang
14 PAK Nam-chol (D)	03.10.88	Amrokgang
3 RI Jun-il	24.08.87	Sobaeksu
5 RI Kwang-chon	04.09.85	April 25
21 RI Kwang-hyok	17.08.87	Kyonggongop
MIDFIELDERS		
17 AN Yong-hak	25.10.78	Omiya Ardija (Jap)
6 KIM Kum-il	10.10.87	April 25
22 KIM Kyong-il	11.12.88	Rimyongsu
15 KIM Yong-jun	19.07.83	Pyongyang City
11 MUN In-guk	29.09.78	April 25
4 PAK Nam-chol (M)	02.07.85	April 25
23 PAK Sung-hyok	30.05.90	Sobaeksu
19 RI Chol-myong	18.02.88	Pyongyang City
FORWARDS		
7 AN Chol-hyok	27.06.87	Rimyongsu
12 CHOE Kum-chol	09.02.87	April 25
10 HONG Yong-jo	22.05.82	Rostov (Rus)
9 JONG Tae-se	02.03.84	Kawasaki F'tale (Jap)
COACH		
KIM Jong-hun	01.09.56	

(* normally a forward, but registered as a goalkeeper)

PARAGUAY

GOALKEEPERS		
12 Diego BARRETO	16.07.81	Cerro Porteno
22 Aldo BOBADILLA	20.04.76	Ind Medellin (Col)
1 Justo VILLAR	30.06.77	Valladolid (Spa)
DEFENDERS		
21 Antolin ALCARAZ	30.07.82	Wigan Athletic (Eng)
5 Julio Cesar CACERES	05.10.79	Atletico Mineiro (Bra)
4 Denis CANIZA	29.08.74	Leon (Mex)
14 Paulo DA SILVA	01.02.80	Sunderland (Eng)
3 Claudio MOREL	02.02.78	Boca Juniors (Arg)
17 Aureliano TORRES	16.06.82	San Lorenzo (Arg)
2 Dario VERON	26.07.79	Pumas (Mex)
MIDFIELDERS		
8 Edgar BARRETO	15.07.84	Atalanta (Ita)
6 Carlos BONET	02.10.77	Olimpia
15 Victor CACERES	25.03.85	Libertad
20 Nestor ORTIGOZA	07.10.84	Argentinos Jnrs (Arg)
16 Cristian RIVEROS	16.10.82	Sunderland (Eng)
11 Jonathan SANTANA	19.10.81	Wolfsburg (Ger)
13 Enrique VERA	10.03.79	LDU Quito (Ecu)
FORWARDS		
19 Lucas BARRIOS	13.11.84	B Dortmund (Ger)
10 Edgar BENITEZ	08.11.87	Pachuca (Mex)
7 Oscar CARDOZO	20.05.83	Benfica (Por)
23 Rodolfo GAMARRA	10.12.88	Libertad
18 Nelson HAEDO VALDEZ	28.11.83	B Dortmund (Ger)
9 Roque SANTA CRUZ	16.08.81	Manchester City (Eng)
COACH		
Gerardo MARTINO (Arg)	20.11.62	

PORTUGAL

GOALKEEPERS		
12 BETO	01.05.82	Porto
22 DANIEL FERNANDES	25.09.83	Bochum (Ger)
1 EDUARDO	19.09.82	Sporting Braga
DEFENDERS		
2 BRUNO ALVES	27.11.81	Porto
23 FABIO COENTRAO	11.03.88	Benfica
13 MIGUEL	04.01.80	Valencia (Spa)
3 PAULO FERREIRA	18.01.79	Chelsea (Eng)
6 RICARDO CARVALHO	18.05.78	Chelsea (Eng)
21 RICARDO COSTA	16.05.81	Valencia (Spa)
4 ROLANDO	31.08.85	Porto
MIDFIELDERS		
20 DECO	27.08.77	Chelsea (Eng)
5 DUDA	27.06.80	Malaga (Spa)
14 MIGUEL VELOSO	11.05.86	Sporting Lisbon
8 PEDRO MENDES	26.02.79	Sporting Lisbon
15 PEPE	26.02.83	Real Madrid (Spa)
16 RAUL MEIRELES	17.03.83	Porto
17 RUBEN AMORIM	27.01.85	Benfica
19 TIAGO	02.05.81	At Madrid (Spa)
FORWARDS		
7 CRISTIANO RONALDO	05.02.85	Real Madrid (Spa)
10 DANNY	07.08.83	Zenit (Rus)
18 HUGO ALMEIDA	23.05.84	W Bremen (Ger)
9 LIEDSON	17.12.77	Sporting Lisbon
11 SIMAO	31.10.79	At Madrid (Spa)
COACH		
Carlos QUEIROZ	01.03.53	

SERBIA

GOALKEEPERS		
23 Andjelko DJURICIC	21.11.80	Leiria (Por)
12 Bojan ISAILOVIC	25.03.80	Zaglebie Lubin (Pol)
1 Vladimir STOJKOVIC	28.07.83	Sporting Lisbon (Por)
DEFENDERS		
6 Branislav IVANOVIC	22.02.84	Chelsea (Eng)
3 Aleksandar KOLAROV	10.11.85	Lazio (Ita)
13 Aleksandar LUKOVIC	23.10.82	Udinese (Ita)
16 Ivan OBRADOVIC	25.07.88	Zaragoza (Spa)
2 Antonio RUKAVINA	26.01.84	Munich 1860 (Ger)
20 Neven SUBOTIC	10.12.88	B Dortmund (Ger)
5 Nemanja VIDIC	21.10.81	Man United (Eng)
MIDFIELDERS		
14 Milan JOVANOVIC	18.04.81	Standard Liege (Blg)
4 Gojko KACAR	26.01.87	Hertha Berlin (Ger)
17 Milos KRASIC	01.11.84	CSKA Moscow (Rus)
22 Zdravko KUZMANOVIC	22.09.87	Stuttgart (Ger)
11 Nenad MILIJAS	30.04.83	Wolves (Eng)
18 Milos NINKOVIC	25.12.84	Dynamo Kyiv (Ukr)
19 Radosav PETROVIC	08.03.89	Partizan Belgrade
10 Dejan STANKOVIC	11.09.78	Internazionale (Ita)
7 Zoran TOSIC	28.04.87	Man United (Eng)
FORWARDS		
8 Danko LAZOVIC	17.05.83	Zenit (Rus)
21 Dragan MRDJA	23.01.84	Vojvodina
9 Marko PANTELIC	15.09.78	Ajax (Hol)
15 Nikola ZIGIC	25.09.80	Birmingham City (Eng)
COACH		
Radomir ANTIC	22.11.48	

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SLOVAKIA

GOALKEEPERS		
23 Dusan KUCIAK	21.05.85	Vaslui (Rom)
1 Jan MUCHA	05.12.82	Legia Warsaw (Pol)
12 Dusan PERNIS	28.11.84	Dundee United (Sco)
DEFENDERS		
4 Marek CECH	26.01.83	West Brom (Eng)
16 Jan DURICA	10.12.81	Loko Moscow (Rus)
2 Peter PEKARIK	30.10.86	Wolfsburg (Ger)
22 Martin PETRAS	02.11.79	Cesena (Ita)
21 Kornel SALATA	24.01.85	Slovan Bratislava
3 Martin SKRTEL	15.12.84	Liverpool (Eng)
5 Radoslav ZABAVNIK	16.09.80	Mainz (Ger)
MIDFIELDERS		
17 Marek HAMSIK	27.07.87	Napoli (Ita)
20 Kamil KOPUNEK	18.05.84	Spartak Trnava
8 Jan KOZAK	22.04.80	Timisoara (Rom)
19 Juraj KUCKA	26.02.87	Sparta Prague (CzR)
10 Marek SAPARA	31.07.82	Ankaragucu (Tur)
15 Miroslav STOCH	19.10.89	Fenerbahce (Tur)
6 Zdenko STRBA	09.06.76	Xanthi (Gre)
7 Vladimir WEISS	30.11.89	Man City (Eng)
FORWARDS		
13 Filip HOLOSKO	17.01.84	Besiktas (Tur)
14 Martin JAKUBKO	26.02.80	Saturn (Rus)
18 Erik JENDRISEK	26.10.86	Schalke (Ger)
9 Stanislav SESTAK	16.12.82	Bochum (Ger)
11 Robert VITTEK	01.04.82	Ankaragucu (Tur)
COACH		
Vladimir WEISS	22.09.64	

SLOVENIA

GOALKEEPERS		
12 Jasmin HANDANOVIC	28.01.78	Mantova (Ita)
1 Samir HANDANOVIC	14.07.84	Udinese (Ita)
16 Aleksander SELIGA	01.02.80	Sparta R'dam (Hol)
DEFENDERS		
2 Miso BRECKO	01.05.84	Koln (Ger)
5 Bostjan CESAR	09.07.82	Grenoble (Fra)
3 Elvedin DZINIC	25.08.85	Maribor
19 Suad FILEKOVIC	16.09.78	Maribor
6 Branko ILIC	06.02.83	Loko Moscow (Rus)
13 Bojan JOKIC	17.05.86	Chievo (Ita)
22 Matej MAVRIC	29.01.79	Kapfenberg (Aut)
4 Marko SULER	09.03.83	Gent (Blg)
MIDFIELDERS		
10 Valter BIRSA	07.08.86	Auxerre (Fra)
17 Andraz KIRM	06.09.84	Wisla Krakow (Pol)
20 Andrej KOMAC	04.12.79	Maccabi Tel-Aviv (Isr)
8 Robert KOREN	20.09.80	no club affiliation
15 Rene KRHIN	21.05.90	Internazionale (Ita)
18 Aleksandar RADOSAVLJEVIC	25.04.79	Larissa (Gre)
21 Dalibor STEVANOVIC	27.09.84	Vitesse (Hol)
FORWARDS		
14 Zlatko DEDIC	05.10.84	Bochum (Ger)
9 Zlatan LJUBIJANKIC	15.12.83	Gent (Blg)
23 Tim MATAVZ	13.01.89	Groningen (Hol)
11 Milivoje NOVAKOVIC	18.05.79	Koln (Ger)
7 Nejc PECNIK	03.01.86	Nacional (Por)
COACH		
Matjaz KEK	09.09.61	

SOUTH AFRICA

GOALKEEPERS		
1 Moeneeb JOSEPHS	19.05.80	Orlando Pirates
16 Itu KHUNE	20.06.87	Kaizer Chiefs
22 Shu-Aib WALTERS	26.12.81	Maritzburg United
DEFENDERS		
14 Matthew BOOTH	14.03.77	Mamelodi S'downs
2 Siboniso GAXA	06.04.84	Mamelodi S'downs
20 Bongani KHUMALO	06.01.87	SuperSport United
3 Tsepo MASILELA	05.05.85	Maccabi Haifa (Isr)
4 Aaron MOKOENA	25.11.80	Portsmouth (Eng)
5 Anele NGCONGCA	20.10.87	Genk (Blg)
21 Siyabonga SANGWENI	29.09.81	Golden Arrows
15 Lucas THWALA	19.10.81	Orlando Pirates
MIDFIELDERS		
7 Lance DAVIDS	11.04.85	Ajax Cape Town
13 Kagisho DIKGACOI	24.11.84	Fulham (Eng)
23 Thanduyise KHUBONI	23.05.86	Golden Arrows
12 Reneilwe LETSHOLONYANE	09.06.82	Kaizer Chiefs
11 Teko MODISE	22.12.82	Orlando Pirates
19 Surprise MORIRI	20.03.80	Mamelodi S'downs
10 Steven PIENAAR	17.03.82	Everton (Eng)
6 MacBeth SIBAYA	25.11.77	Rubin Kazan (Rus)
8 Siphiwe TSHABALALA	25.09.84	Kaizer Chiefs
FORWARDS		
9 Katlego MPHELA	29.11.84	Mamelodi S'downs
18 Siyabonga NOMVETHE	02.12.77	Moroka Swallows
17 Bernard PARKER	16.03.86	Twente (Hol)
COACH		
Carlos Alberto PARREIRA (Bra)	27.02.43	

SOUTH KOREA

GOALKEEPERS		
18 JUNG Sung-ryong	04.01.85	Songnam Ilhwa
21 KIM Young-kwang	28.06.83	Ulsan Hyundai
1 LEE Woon-jae	26.04.73	Suwon Bluewings
DEFENDERS		
22 CHA Du-ri	25.07.80	Freiburg (Ger)
4 CHO Yong-hyung	03.11.83	Jeju United
23 KANG Min-soo	14.02.86	Suwon Bluewings
15 KIM Dong-jin	29.01.82	Ulsan Hyundai
3 KIM Hyung-il	27.04.84	Pohang Steelers
14 LEE Jung-soo	08.01.80	Kashima Antlers (Jap)
12 LEE Young-pyo	23.04.77	Al Hilal (Sau)
2 OH Beom-seok	29.07.84	Ulsan Hyundai
MIDFIELDERS		
16 KI Sung-yueng	24.01.89	Celtic (Sco)
6 KIM Bo-kyung	06.10.89	Cerezo Osaka (Jap)
13 KIM Jae-sung	03.10.83	Pohang Steelers
8 KIM Jung-woo	09.05.82	Gwangju Sangmu
5 KIM Nam-il	14.03.77	Tom Tomsk (Rus)
17 LEE Chung-yong	02.07.88	Bolton (Eng)
7 PARK Ji-sung	25.02.81	Man United (Eng)
19 YEOM Ki-hun	30.03.83	Suwon Bluewings
FORWARDS		
9 AHN Jung-hwan	27.01.76	Dalian Shide (Chn)
20 LEE Dong-gook	29.04.79	Jeonbuk Motors
11 LEE Seung-yeoul	06.03.89	Seoul
10 PARK Chu-young	10.07.85	Monaco (Fra)
COACH		
HUH Jung-moo	13.01.55	

SPAIN

GOALKEEPERS		
1 Iker CASILLAS	20.05.81	Real Madrid
23 Pepe REINA	31.08.82	Liverpool (Eng)
12 Victor VALDES	14.01.82	Barcelona
DEFENDERS		
2 Raul ALBIOL	04.09.85	Real Madrid
17 Alvaro ARBELOA	17.01.83	Real Madrid
11 Joan CAPDEVILA	03.02.78	Villarreal
4 Carlos MARCHENA	31.07.79	Valencia
3 Gerard PIQUE	02.02.87	Barcelona
5 Carles PUYOL	13.04.78	Barcelona
15 SERGIO RAMOS	30.03.86	Real Madrid
MIDFIELDERS		
16 Sergio BUSQUETS	16.07.88	Barcelona
21 DAVID SILVA	08.01.86	Valencia
10 Cesc FABREGAS	04.05.87	Arsenal (Eng)
20 Javier MARTINEZ	02.09.88	Athletic Bilbao
6 Andres INIESTA	11.05.84	Barcelona
14 XABI ALONSO	25.11.81	Real Madrid
8 XAVI	25.01.80	Barcelona
FORWARDS		
19 Fernando LLORENTE	26.02.85	Athletic Bilbao
13 Juan MATA	28.04.88	Valencia
22 Jesus NAVAS	21.11.85	Sevilla
18 PEDRO	28.07.87	Barcelona
9 Fernando TORRES	20.03.84	Liverpool (Eng)
7 David VILLA	03.12.81	Barcelona
COACH		
Vicente DEL BOSQUE	23.12.50	

SWITZERLAND

GOALKEEPERS		
1 Diego BENAGLIO	08.09.83	Wolfsburg (Ger)
21 Johnny LEONI	30.06.84	Zurich
12 Marco WOLFLI	22.08.82	Young Boys
DEFENDERS		
22 Mario EGGIMANN	24.01.81	Hannover (Ger)
13 Stephane GRICHTING	30.03.79	Auxerre (Fra)
2 Stephan LICHTSTEINER	16.01.84	Lazio (Ita)
3 Ludovic MAGNIN	20.04.79	Zurich
4 Philippe SENDEROS	14.02.85	Fulham (Eng)
5 Steve VON BERGEN	10.06.83	Hertha Berlin (Ger)
17 Reto ZIEGLER	16.01.86	Sampdoria (Ita)
MIDFIELDERS		
7 Tranquillo BARNETTA	22.05.85	B Leverkusen (Ger)
11 Valon BEHRAMI	19.04.85	West Ham (Eng)
16 Gelson FERNANDES	02.09.86	Saint-Etienne (Fra)
6 Benjamin HUGGEL	07.07.77	Basle
8 Gokhan INLER	27.06.84	Udinese (Ita)
14 Marco PADALINO	08.12.83	Sampdoria (Ita)
20 Pirmin SCHWEGLER	09.03.87	E Frankfurt (Ger)
23 Xherdan SHAQIRI	10.10.91	Basle
15 Hakan YAKIN	22.02.77	Lucerne
FORWARDS		
18 Albert BUNJAKU	29.11.83	Nurnburg (Ger)
19 Eren DERDIYOK	12.06.88	B Leverkusen (Ger)
9 Alexander FREI	15.07.79	Basle
10 Blaise NKUFO	25.05.75	Twente (Hol)
COACH		
Ottmar HITZFELD (Ger)	12.01.49	

URUGUAY

GOALKEEPERS		
12 Juan CASTILLO	17.04.78	Deportivo Cali (Col)
1 Fernando MUSLERA	16.06.86	Lazio (Ita)
23 Martin SILVA	25.03.83	Defensor
DEFENDERS		
22 Martin CACERES	07.04.87	Barcelona (Spa)
4 Jorge FUCILE	19.11.84	Porto (Por)
3 Diego GODIN	16.02.86	Villarreal (Spa)
2 Diego LUGANO	02.11.80	Fenerbahce (Tur)
16 Maxi PEREIRA	08.06.84	Benfica (Por)
19 Andres SCOTTI	14.12.75	Colo Colo (Chl)
6 Mauricio VICTORINO	11.10.82	Uni de Chile (Chl)
MIDFIELDERS		
17 Egidio AREVALO	01.01.82	Penarol
8 Sebastian EGUREN	08.01.81	Villarreal (Spa)
20 Alvaro FERNANDEZ	11.10.85	Uni de Chile (Chl)
5 Walter GARGANO	23.07.84	Napoli (Ita)
18 Ignacio GONZALEZ	14.05.82	Valencia (Spa)
14 Nicolas LODEIRO	21.03.89	Ajax (Hol)
11 Alvaro PEREIRA	28.11.85	Porto (Por)
15 Diego PEREZ	18.05.80	Monaco (Fra)
FORWARDS		
13 Sebastian ABREU	17.10.76	Botafogo (Bra)
7 Edinson CAVANI	14.02.87	Palermo (Ita)
21 Sebastian FERNANDEZ	23.05.85	Banfield (Arg)
10 Diego FORLAN	19.05.79	At Madrid (Spa)
9 Luis SUAREZ	24.01.87	Ajax (Hol)
COACH		
Oscar TABAREZ	03.03.47	

USA

GOALKEEPERS		
18 Brad GUZAN	09.09.84	Aston Villa (Eng)
23 Marcus HAHNEMANN	15.06.72	Wolves (Eng)
1 Tim HOWARD	06.03.79	Everton (Eng)
DEFENDERS		
3 Carlos BOCANEGRA	25.05.79	Rennes (Fra)
12 Jonathan BORNSTEIN	07.11.84	Chivas USA
6 Steve CHERUNDOLO	19.02.79	Hannover (Ger)
15 Jay DeMERIT	04.12.79	Watford (Eng)
21 Clarence GOODSON	17.05.82	IK Start (Nor)
5 Oguchi ONYEWU	13.05.82	Milan (Ita)
2 Jonathan SPECTOR	01.03.86	West Ham (Eng)
MIDFIELDERS		
7 DaMarcus BEASLEY	24.05.82	Rangers (Sco)
4 Michael BRADLEY	31.07.87	Bor M'gladbach (Ger)
13 Ricardo CLARK	10.02.83	E Frankfurt (Ger)
8 Clint DEMPSEY	09.03.83	Fulham (Eng)
10 Landon DONOVAN	04.03.82	Los Angeles Galaxy
19 Maurice EDU	18.04.86	Rangers (Sco)
22 Benny FEILHABER	19.01.85	AGF Aarhus (Den)
11 Stuart HOLDEN	01.08.85	Bolton (Eng)
16 Francisco TORRES	29.10.87	Pachuca (Mex)
FORWARDS		
17 Jozy ALTIDORE	06.11.89	Villarreal (Spa)
14 Edson BUDDLE	21.05.81	Los Angeles Galaxy
20 Robbie FINDLEY	04.08.85	Real Salt Lake
9 Herculez GOMEZ	06.04.82	Puebla (Mex)
COACH		
Bob BRADLEY	03.03.58	

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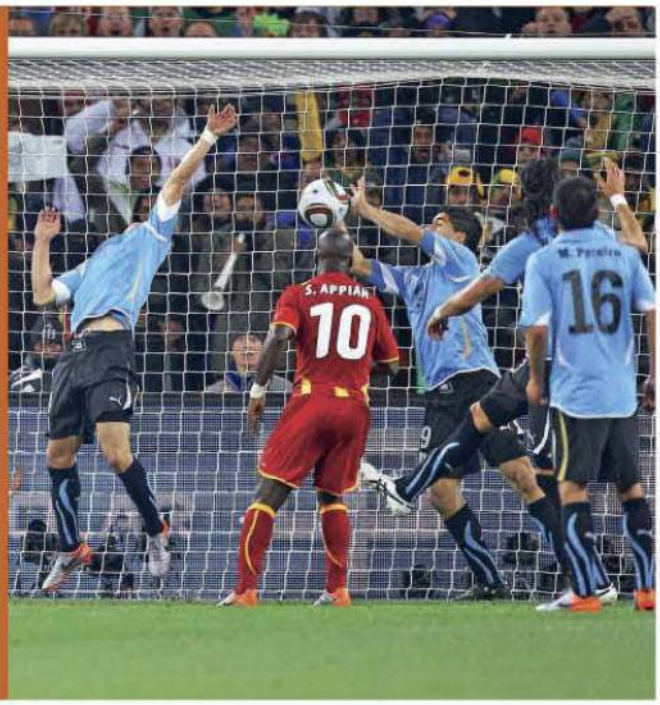
Famous Last Words

Who said what and why

"The 'Hand of God' now belongs to me. Mine is the real 'Hand Of God'. I made the best save of the tournament. Sometimes in training I play as a goalkeeper so it was worth it"

Luis Suarez rubs salt in Ghana's wounds



"We are really sorry for the population, the French fans. We underperformed from the first game. We are in the right position, we are out. We deserve it"
Florent Malouda on France's exit

"I prefer a calm coach on the bench like Van Marwijk, rather than an idiot like Maradona or Dunga"
Holland's Wesley Sneijder pays his coach a back-handed compliment

"Ozil chose the wrong passport"
Turkey coach Guus Hiddink on the Germany star of Turkish origin

"Dear Englander, now you know how we have felt for 44 long years. That was a goal yesterday, you have been cheated. But, please, you must admit it now. Wembley [1966] was no goal"
German tabloid *Bild* savours the country's 4-1 win over England

"Go f**k yourself, you dirty bastard"
Nicolas Anelka's half-time rant at coach Raymond Domenech during France v Mexico

"The world looks the same these days. But here it's different. You go into the bush and see all those incredible animals. I was talking to the guy who took us round and asked what would happen if we tried to walk back. He said it was 50-50 whether we would make it. There are parts of Camden Town like that, but it was quite surreal really"
Joe Cole on England's pre-action safari

"I can't repeat what she said about the referee. She was happy with the way I played, but sad with the sending off"
Kaka on his grandmother's reaction to his red card against the Ivory Coast

Changed...Maradona

"Yes, the ball hit my hand, not once but twice, but it was a splendid goal and what better place to score such a goal than in the World Cup? The goal was so beautiful it did not matter it was a handball"
Luis Fabiano on the assistance he received for his second goal against Ivory Coast

"I feel very proud to be part of this moment because, as a manager before, they said I am clueless and a c**k. But now after four games they say I'm great"
Diego Maradona has a gentle dig at his critics

"You can't come away for a month and live like a monk. The manager is aware of that and it's not like that. You don't have 10 beers, but you might have one or two"
Frank Lampard on life in the England camp

Read all about it...Germany rejoices

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